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COLLECTED WORKS OF
OLIVER
GOLDSMITH

COLLECTED WORKS OF
OLIVER
GOLDSMITH

EDITED BY ARTHUR FRIEDMAN

VOLUME II

The Citizen of the World

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ABBREVIATIONS IN THIS VOLUME

- Collected Letters: The Collected Letters of Oliver Goldsmith.* Edited by Katharine C. Balderston. Cambridge, 1928.
- Crane, *New Essays: New Essays by Oliver Goldsmith.* Edited by Ronald S. Crane. Chicago, 1927.
- D'Argens, *Lettres chinoises: Lettres chinoises, ou correspondance philosophique, historique & critique, entre un chinois voyageur à Paris & ses correspondans à la Chine, en Muscovie, en Perse & au Japon.* [Par Jean Baptiste de Boyer, Marquis d'Argens.] Nouvelle édition. 5 tom. La Haye, 1751.
- D'Argens, *Lettres juives: Lettres juives, ou correspondance philosophique, historique, et critique, entre un juif voyageur à Paris & ses correspondans en divers endroits.* [Par Jean Baptiste de Boyer, Marquis d'Argens.] 4 tom. Amsterdam, 1736-7.
- Dobson: *The Citizen of the World.* Edited by Austin Dobson. 2 vols. 1891.
- Du Halde: *A Description of the Empire of China and Chinese-Tartary.* . . . From the French of J. B. Du Halde. 2 vols. 1738, 1741.
- Le Comte: *Nouveaux mémoires sur l'état présent de la Chine.* Par Louis Le Comte. 3^{me} édition. 2 tom. Paris, 1697.
- Percy Memoir: 'The Life of Dr. Oliver Goldsmith.' In *The Miscellaneous Works of Oliver Goldsmith, M.B.*, 1801, Vol. I.
- Prior, *Life: The Life of Oliver Goldsmith, M.B.* By James Prior. 2 vols. 1837.
- Sells: *Les Sources françaises de Goldsmith.* Par Arthur Lytton Sells. Paris, 1924.
- Smith: *Oliver Goldsmith's 'The Citizen of the World': a Study.* By Hamilton Jewett Smith. New Haven, 1926.
- Works*, ed. Gibbs: *The Works of Oliver Goldsmith.* Edited by J. W. M. Gibbs. 5 vols. 1885-6.
- Works*, ed. Prior: *The Miscellaneous Works of Oliver Goldsmith, M.B.* Edited by James Prior. 4 vols. 1837.

THE
CITIZEN
of the
WORLD

INTRODUCTION

Composition, publication, and reception

WHEN the *Public Ledger, or Daily Register of Commerce and Intelligence* began publication on 12 January 1760, Goldsmith had, according to Prior, an agreement, apparently with John Newbery, one of the proprietors, 'to furnish papers of an amusing character twice a week, for which according to contemporary statements, he was to receive a salary of 100*l.* per annum'.¹ Goldsmith's chief contribution to the *Public Ledger* was a series of 119 Chinese letters, later collected as *The Citizen of the World*. A brief introductory letter and a letter of normal length appeared on 24 January 1760 without any indication that a series was intended, and two more letters were printed in January before numbering began. Ten letters appeared in February, ten in March, eight in April, ten in May, eleven in June, eight in July, nine in August, ten in September, ten in October, six in November, three in December, six in January 1761, three in February, three in March, three in April, three in May, none in June, one in July, and the final one in August. Except for a few of the early letters, they were given the place of distinction as the first article in the paper.

Our only information concerning the inception of the Chinese letters² is reported by Prior:

It may gratify curiosity to know that his first design according to accounts of his friends was to make his hero a native of Morocco or Fez;³ but, reflecting on the rude nature of the people of Barbary, this idea was

¹ *Life*, i. 356.

² Goldsmith's remark in his letter of 14 August 1758 to Robert Bryanton that 'I use Chinese names to show my own erudition, as I shall soon make our Chinese talk like an Englishman to show his' (*Collected Letters*, pp. 39-40) has been taken as evidence that he was already actively planning the series; but he is merely referring to what follows in the letter.

³ The first essay in Ronald S. Crane's *New Essays by Oliver Goldsmith* is 'A Letter Supposed to be Written by the Moorish Secretary in London, to his Correspondent in Fez', from the *British Magazine* for January 1760; the editor reprints it because of the possibility that 'we have in this isolated letter, printed nearly a month before the first Chinese letter appeared in the *Public Ledger*, a surviving trace of the abandoned scheme'. It turns out that this letter, with the exception of the heading and the first two sentences, is a translation of the 'Fragment d'une lettre siamoise' in the tenth 'Amusement' of Charles Rivière Dufresny's *Les Amusemens sérieux et comiques* (1699).

dropped. A Chinese was then chosen as offering more novelty of character than a Turk or Persian; and being equally advanced in the scale of civilization, could pass an opinion on all he saw better than the native of a more barbarous country.¹

Probably equally important in Goldsmith's decision in favour of a Chinese was the fact that he would need information about the supposed writer's country of origin, and information about China he found readily available in Louis Le Comte's *Nouveaux mémoires sur l'état présent de la Chine*, which he consulted in the third edition, published at Paris in 1697, and in J. B. Du Halde's large collection, which he used in the English translation entitled *A Description of the Empire of China*, published by Edward Cave in two folio volumes in 1738 and 1741.² Possibly the decisive factor was that from the time he began the series Goldsmith was acquainted with the Marquis d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises*, and from this work, whenever inspiration failed him, he was able to draw a sentence, a paragraph, or even an entire letter.³

There is little evidence concerning the popularity of the Chinese letters while they were appearing in the *Public Ledger*. A number of them were reprinted in other periodicals;⁴ and the reviewer of *The Citizen of the World* in the *Monthly Review* (xxvi. 477) says that 'these entertaining Letters . . . were first printed in *The Ledger*; and are supposed to have contributed not a little towards the success of that Paper'. On the other hand, one may infer from Letter XXXIII (numbered XXXI in the *Public Ledger*), the head-note to Letter XXX (XXXII in the *Public Ledger*), Letter LI (XLIX in the *Public Ledger*), and 'The Editor's Preface' in *The Citizen of the World* that the letters were criticized for not being sufficiently Chinese.

In a note following the last of the Chinese letters in the *Public Ledger* for 14 August 1761 Goldsmith promised extensive improvements in a collected edition: 'The numerous Errors of the Press

¹ *Life*, i. 360.

² The editions can be determined by Goldsmith's own footnote references. The influence of Le Comte and Du Halde has been studied by A. L. Sells in *Les Sources françaises de Goldsmith* and more thoroughly by H. J. Smith in *Oliver Goldsmith's 'The Citizen of the World': a Study*. In my notes I use this information without further acknowledgement.

³ The influence of the *Lettres chinoises* has been thoroughly treated by R. S. Crane and H. J. Smith in *Modern Philology*, xix (1921), 83-92; I use the results of their study without further acknowledgement. Phillip Harth has shown in *Notes and Queries*, ccxviii (1953), 529-30, that Goldsmith used the 1755 edition of the *Lettres chinoises*.

⁴ See Smith, pp. 20-21.

are corrected, and the Errors of the Writer, still, perhaps, more numerous, are retrenched. Some new Letters are added, and others, which were remarkable only for being dull, are wholly omitted.¹ He actually decided to retain all 119 letters that had appeared in the *Public Ledger*; he changed the order considerably, however, particularly in the latter part of the series.² He added 'The Editor's Preface' and four new letters. Two of these letters (Nos. CXXI and CXXII) were, so far as is known, written especially for the new edition. The other two were revisions of essays that Goldsmith had published earlier: Letter CXVII is from the *Bee*, No. IV, and Letter CXIX is from the *British Magazine* for June 1760. How very extensively he revised the text of the Chinese letters for the collected edition can be seen in the textual notes of the present edition.

In the note in the *Public Ledger* following the last Chinese letter Goldsmith announced that 'these letters will shortly be published, in two Volumes of the usual Spectator Size'; they did not appear, however, for eight and a half months. That there was some unexpected delay is evident from the following advertisement that appeared in the *Public Ledger* for 13 and 16 November 1761, five and a half months before publication: 'In a few Days will be published, By Mr. NEWBERY, in St. Paul's Church-yard, THE CITIZEN of the WORLD. . . .' The delay is confirmed and probably accounted for by an entry in the ledgers of William Strahan (British Museum Add. MS. 48800, f. 120^v):

Mr John Newbery D^r

1761

Sepr.

Chinese Letters, 2 vol. 23 Sheets, N^o 1500,

@ £1:13:0: _____ 37 19 -

Extra Corrections and Alterations in D^o

throughout _____ 3 15 -

This entry shows that the printing in Strahan's shop was at least begun by September 1761. More interesting is the reference to 'Corrections and Alterations', which were in addition to those normally made in the printing house and which amounted to almost exactly a tenth of the whole cost of printing. It seems probable that Goldsmith read his proofs slowly and made very extensive revisions in them.

¹ Goldsmith's note is given in full below in the last textual note on Letter CXXIII.

² The order can be studied in the table below in this introduction.

The new edition was finally published 1 May 1762 in two volumes duodecimo, price six shillings bound, with the title *The Citizen of the World; or Letters from a Chinese Philosopher, Residing in London, to his Friends in the East*. Some copies bear the imprint: 'Printed for J. NEWBERY, at the *Bible and Sun*, in St. Paul's Church-yard.' Others have title-leaves which, in the copies I have seen, are cancels;¹ these titles are printed from a new setting of type, and they have the imprint: 'Printed for the AUTHOR; AND Sold by J. NEWBERY and W. BRISTOW, in St. Paul's Church-yard; J. LEAKE and W. FREDERICK, at Bath; B. COLLINS, at Salisbury; and A. M. SMART and Co. at Reading.' I can offer no satisfactory explanation of the cancels.²

The Citizen of the World was favourably, if hardly enthusiastically, received by the two London literary reviews. The *Critical Review* for May 1762 (xiii. 397-400) devotes three pages to the work. After developing the thesis that human nature has been so fully described that 'nothing more remains for men of genius than to produce new combinations of old thoughts', the reviewer continues:

Were we to examine these reflections of *our Citizen of the World* by the standard of originality, our pleasure would be greatly diminished; but let us view them with regard to utility, and we must confess their merit. What seems cloying to an hundred persons of fastidious appetites, may prove wholesome delicious nourishment to thousands. These letters, if we mistake not, made their first appearance in a daily news-paper, and were necessarily calculated to the meridian of the multitude, although they greatly surpass any late publications of the same nature, both in diction and sentiment. This circumstance alone would sufficiently plead the author's excuse, had he need of an apology; that genius must be fruitful, indeed, which can supply such a variety of tastes with daily

¹ Since in Vol. II the title is a disjunct leaf, the cancel is inferred from the first volume.

² The original title seems to need no explanation. On 5 March 1762 Goldsmith acknowledged receipt from Newbery of five guineas, 'which, with what I have received at different times before, is in full for the copy of the Chinese Letters' (Prior, *Life*, i. 397), and consequently one might expect Newbery's name to appear alone in the imprint.

An explanation of the new title must take into account two considerations. (1) The cancel apparently does not indicate a reissue some time after the work was published; for the advertisement in *Lloyd's Evening Post* for 21-23 April 1762, eight days before the work was published, has 'Printed for the Author' and the list of booksellers as on the second title-page, except that there are two additional names after Bristow's; and all other advertisements of 1762 that I have seen are of this kind, except that in some Bristow's name is omitted. (2) The words 'Printed for the AUTHOR' in the imprint should mean that the author owned the copy, paid for the printing, and disposed of copies to the booksellers. It is difficult to believe, however, that Goldsmith would have had money to buy back the copy from Newbery and to stand the costs of printing.

entertainment. It is rather extraordinary, that the philosophic *Lien Chi Altangi* could handle so many topics agreeably, and sustain the fatigue of so long a course without weariness, than that he has sometimes stumbled. All his observations are marked with good sense, genius frequently breaks the fetters of restraint, and humour is sometimes successfully employed to enforce the dictates of reason.

Then after a two-page quotation from Letter V, the review is thus concluded: 'In course of this correspondence between *Lien Chi* and his friends, we meet with a great number of ingenious criticisms upon men and books, which it would be needless to specify, as we most heartily recommend the whole performance to the perusal of our readers.'

In the *Monthly Review* the work is noticed more briefly in the Monthly Catalogue for June 1762 (xxvi. 477). The review begins thus: 'Although this Chinese Philosopher has nothing Asiatic about him, and is as errant an European as the Philosopher of Malmesbury; yet he has some excellent remarks upon men, manners, and things—as the phrase goes.' Then after a sentence on the earlier publication of the letters, the writer says: 'They are said to be the work of the lively and ingenious Writer of An Enquiry into the present State of Polite Learning in Europe; a Writer, whom, it seems, we undesignedly offended, by some Strictures on the conduct of many of our modern Scribblers.' The review concludes with the explanation that the earlier remarks were 'entirely general' and were not intended as 'personal reflection' on the author.¹

Perhaps the highest early praise of the work appeared in William Rider's *An Historical and Critical Account of the Lives and Writings of the Living Authors of Great-Britain*, published in 1762; here, after mentioning the *Enquiry* and the *Bee*, the author continues:

But the *Chinese Letters*, first published in the *Ledger*, in Numbers, and since republished in Volumes, under the Title of the *Citizen of the World*, are, of all the Productions of this Author, those that do the highest Honour to his Genius, as they must be acknowledged by every Reader free from the Influence of Prepossession, to be but little inferior to the *Persian Letters* of the celebrated *Montesquieu*. To conclude Dr. *Goldsmith's* Character as an Author, it must be acknowledged, that whilst he is surpassed by few of his Contemporaries with Regard to the Matter which his Writings contain, he is superior to most of them in Style, having happily found out the Secret to unite Elevation with Ease, a

¹ The authorship of this review is not given in the publisher Griffiths's marked copy.

Perfection in Language, which few Writers of our Nation have attained to . . . [pp. 13-14].

The Citizen of the World was reprinted at Dublin in 1762, and it was translated into French and German in 1763. But the work seems to have had no great immediate popularity in England. In May 1766, possibly to take advantage of the early popularity of *The Vicar of Wakefield*, Newbery advertised it in the newspapers under the heading 'This Day was published', but without specifying a new edition, and he added this note: 'This Work (great Part of which was written by Dr. GOLDSMITH¹) has been so favourably received abroad, that a French Translation of it has gone through Four Impressions.' No new edition, however, was called for in London during Goldsmith's lifetime. The second London edition, called on the title-page 'The Third Edition', was published on 7 July 1774, three months after his death. It was in the remaining years of the century that the work had its great vogue: there were London editions dated 1776, 1782, 1785, 1790, 1792, 1793-4, 1794, 1796, 1799, and 1800.²

The text

For most of the letters there are only two authoritative texts: the text of the Chinese letters in the *Public Ledger* and that of the first edition of *The Citizen of the World* of 1762. The second edition (called 'The Third Edition') of 1774, which has been used as the copy-text for most modern editions, appeared after Goldsmith's death, and a complete collation has convinced me that the few substantive variants it contains were all made by the compositor; it has consequently been given no authority, and its distinctive readings have not been recorded. For most of the letters, then, the *Public Ledger* (from photostats of the file in the British Museum) is used as copy-text, and into the edited text are introduced all the new readings of the edition of 1762 that appear to have been made by the author.

A few letters call for special comment.

(1) Letters CXXI and CXXII were, so far as is known, printed

¹ Probably this statement was intended as a guard against a charge of plagiarism if it was recognized that some of the letters were translated from the Marquis d'Argens. The *British Magazine* had earlier described the work as 'partly original, partly borrowed' (Smith, pp. 31-32).

² This list is from *The Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature*, ii. 641. Some of the dates may represent reissues.

for the first time in 1762, and that edition consequently has sole authority. The numbers of the *Public Ledger* in which Letters CI and CIII supposedly first appeared are missing from the file in the British Museum, and I have not found them elsewhere; for these two letters the edition of 1762 has of necessity been given sole authority.

(2) For Letter CXVII my text is that of the *Bee*, modified by Goldsmith's revisions of 1762.

(3) Letters LIV, LV, LXI, LXIX, LXXIII, and CXIV and parts of Letters XXIV and LXVIII were reprinted from the edition of 1762 with extensive revisions in *Essays by Mr. Goldsmith* (1765),¹ and from this they were reprinted, in some cases with further important revisions, in *Essays by Oliver Goldsmith*, 'The Second Edition, corrected' (1766). The revisions for the two editions of the *Essays* are of two sorts. (a) Many, probably most, of them are stylistic revisions of the kind that Goldsmith habitually made. All revisions of this sort I have admitted into the edited text. (b) Some revisions seem specifically designed to take the papers out of the context of a series of 'Letters from a Chinese Philosopher, residing in London, to his Friends in the East', and to make them more appropriate for detached 'Essays by Mr. Goldsmith'. Since in this edition the letters are printed as part of the original series, *I have not admitted revisions of this second sort into the edited text.*

(4) Letter CVIII presents an additional complication. This letter first appeared in the *Public Ledger*; it was reprinted with revisions in *The Citizen of the World*; it was reprinted again from the *Public Ledger* (or possibly from some undiscovered reprint of that text) with a different set of revisions in the *Essays* of 1765, from which it was reprinted in the *Essays* of 1766. The problem is here simplified by the facts that all the revisions in 1765 were of the first sort described in the preceding paragraph, no new revisions were made in 1766, and the same passage was not revised differently in 1762 and 1765. I have admitted the revisions of both 1762 and 1765 into the edited text.

(5) Letter CXIX, which first appeared in the *British Magazine*, presents much the same problem with greater complexity. It was

¹ There are two editions of the *Essays* of 1765: the first edition with an engraved title-page and a reprint with a title-page printed from type. The reprint is probably a piracy; even if it is not, there is no reason to give authority to its distinctive readings, which I have not recorded. See Friedman, *Studies in Bibliography*, v (1952-3), 190-3.

reprinted from the *British Magazine* with very extensive revisions in *The Citizen of the World* in 1762; it was again reprinted from the *British Magazine* with a few revisions in the *Essays* of 1765, from which it was reprinted with further revisions in the *Essays* of 1766. I have used the *British Magazine* as copy-text, and I have introduced into it all the authorial revisions of 1762, 1765, and 1766, except, of course, where passages were revised differently in different editions; there I have considered the last revisions as most authoritative.

A few features of the present edition call for special comment.

(1) The statement of contents silently placed at the head of each letter in square brackets is taken from the Table of Contents in the edition of 1762.

(2) In the *Public Ledger* the address at the beginning of each letter is given in full; in the edition of 1762 the abbreviated forms *To the same* or *From the same* are used in most cases. These abbreviated addresses do not always change when the correspondents change, they are not very informative, and they are particularly inconvenient for a reader concerned with a single letter. The fuller addresses of the *Public Ledger* have consequently been given in the text, and the abbreviated forms of 1762 have *not* been recorded in the textual notes.

(3) In the present edition the numbering of the letters has been regularized, and the numbers given in the early editions have *not* been recorded in the textual notes. The following table of equivalents will show the changes from the original order in the *Public Ledger* and will provide easy reference to the edition of 1762.

<i>Present Edition</i>	<i>Public Ledger</i>	<i>The Citizen of the World, 1762</i>
I	unnumbered	I
II	unnumbered	II
III	unnumbered	III
IV	unnumbered	IV
V	VI	V
VI	IV	VI
VII	V	VII
VIII	VII	VIII
IX	VIII	IX
X	IX	X
XI	X	XI
XII	XI	XII

<i>Present Edition</i>	<i>Public Ledger</i>	<i>The Citizen of the World, 1762</i>
XIII	XII	XIII
XIV	XIII	XIV
XV	XIV	XV
XVI	XV	XVI
XVII	XVI	XVII
XVIII	XVII	XVIII
XIX	XVIII	XIX
XX	XIX	XX
XXI	XX	XXI
XXII	XXI	XXII
XXIII	XXII	XXIII
XXIV	XXIII	XXIV
XXV	XXIV	XXV
XXVI	XXV	XXV
XXVII	XXVI	XXVI
XXVIII	XXVIII	XXVII
XXIX	XXVII	XXVIII
XXX	XXXII	XXIX
XXXI	XXIX	XXX
XXXII	XXX	XXXI
XXXIII	XXXI	XXXII
XXXIV	XXXIII	XXXIII
XXXV	XXXIV	XXXIV
XXXVI	XXXV	XXXV
XXXVII	XXXVI	XXXVI
XXXVIII	XXXVII	XXXVII
XXXIX	XXXVIII	XXXVIII
XL	XXXIX	XXXIX
XLI	XL	XL
XLII	XLI	XLI
XLIII	XLII	XLII
XLIV	XLIII	XLIII
XLV	XLIV	XLIV
XLVI	XLV	XLV
XLVII	XLVI	XLVI
XLVIII	XLVII	XLVII
XLIX	XLVIII	XLVIII
L	XLVIII	XLIX
LI	XLIX	XLIX
LII	L	L
LIII	LI	LI

<i>Present Edition</i>	<i>Public Ledger</i>	<i>The Citizen of the World, 1762</i>
LIV	LII	LII
LV	LX	LIII
LVI	LIII	LIV
LVII	LIV	LV
LVIII	LV	LVI
LIX	LVI	LVII
LX	LVIII	LVII
LXI	LVII	LVIII
LXII	LIX	LIX
LXIII	LXIV	LX
LXIV	LXII	LXI
LXV	LXIII	LXII
LXVI	LXV	LXIII
LXVII	LXVI	LXIV
LXVIII	LXVII	LXV
LXIX	LXVIII	LXVI
LXX	LXIX	LXVII
LXXI	LXX	LXVIII
LXXII	LXXI	LXIX
LXXIII	LXXII	LXX
LXXIV	LXXIII	LXXI
LXXV	LXXIV	LXXII
LXXVI	LXXV	LXXIII
LXXVII	LXXVI	LXXIV
LXXVIII	LXXVII	LXXV
LXXIX	LXXVIII	LXXVI
LXXX	LXXIX	LXXVII
LXXXI	LXXX	LXXVIII
LXXXII	LXXXI	LXXIX
LXXXIII	LXXXII	LXXX
LXXXIV	LXXXIII	LXXXI
LXXXV	LXXXIV	LXXXII
LXXXVI	LXXXV	LXXXIII
LXXXVII	LXXXVIII	LXXXIV
LXXXVIII	XCI	LXXXV
LXXXIX	XCII	LXXXVI
XC	XCVI	LXXXVII
XCI	XCII	LXXXVIII
XCII	XCIV	LXXXIX
XCIII	XCIX	XC
XCIV	LXXXVI	XCI

<i>Present Edition</i>	<i>Public Ledger</i>	<i>The Citizen of the World, 1762</i>
XCV	LXXXVII	XCII
XCVI	LXXXIX	XCIII
XCVII	XC	XCIV
XCVIII	XCIV	XCV
XCIX	XCVII	XCVI
C	XCVIII	XCVII
CI	[C] ¹	XCVIII
CII	CI	XCIX
CIII	[CII] ¹	C
CIV	CIII	CI
CV	CIV	CII
CVI	CVI	CIII
CVII	CV	CIV
CVIII	CVI	CV
CIX	CVIII	CVI
CX	CXII	CVII
CXI	CVII	CVIII
CXII	CIX	CIX
CXIII	CX	CX
CXIV	CXI	CXI
CXV	CXIII	CXII
CXVI	CXIV	CXIII
CXVII	—	CXIV
CXVIII	LXI	CXV
CXIX	—	CXVI
CXX	CXV	CXVI
CXXI	—	CXVII
CXXII	—	CXVIII
CXXIII	CXVI	CXIX

The following abbreviations are used in the textual notes:

PL: the original printing of the letters in the *Public Ledger*, 1760–1.

62: *The Citizen of the World*, 1762.

65: *Essays by Mr. Goldsmith*, 1765, engraved title-page.

66: *Essays by Oliver Goldsmith*, 'The Second Edition, corrected', 1766.

59: the *Bee*, 1759 (used only for Letter CXVII).

BM: the *British Magazine*, 1760 (used only for Letter CXIX).

¹ The two numbers in brackets are missing from the British Museum file.

THE
Citizen of the World;
OR
LETTERS
FROM A
CHINESE PHILOSOPHER,
Residing in LONDON,
TO HIS
FRIENDS in the EAST.

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THE EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THE schoolmen had formerly a very exact way of computing the abilities of their Saints or authors. Escobar, for instance, was said to have learning as five, genius as four, and gravity as seven. Caramuel was greater than he. His learning was as eight, his genius as six, and his gravity as thirteen.¹ Were I to estimate the merits of 5 our Chinese Philosopher by the same scale, I would not hesitate to state his genius still higher; but as to his learning and gravity, these I think might safely be marked as nine hundred and ninety nine, within one degree of absolute frigidity.

Yet upon his first appearance here, many were angry not to find 10 him as ignorant as a Tripoline ambassador, or an Envoy from Mujac.² They were surprized to find a man born so far from London, that school of prudence and wisdom, endued even with a moderate capacity. They expressed the same surprize at his knowlege that the Chinese do at ours. **How comes it*, said they, *that the Europeans, so* 15 *remote from China, think with so much justice and precision? They have never read our books, they scarcely know even our letters, and yet they talk and reason just as we do.* The truth is, the Chinese and we

* Le Comte, Vol. 1. p. 210.³

THE EDITOR'S PREFACE.] 62; the entire Preface om. PL

¹ Escobar and Caramuel were Spanish theologians of the seventeenth century; both were attacked as casuists in Pascal's *Les Provinciales* (Escobar extensively in Letters V–XIV and Caramuel in Letters VII and XV), and Escobar is mentioned in d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises* (ii. 294). The computation of their abilities is probably an invention of Goldsmith's.

² An 'ambassador from Tripoly' was introduced at court in October 1759 (*Gentleman's Magazine*, xxix. 493); and in his specimen of a magazine in *Lloyd's Evening Post* for 8–10 February 1762 Goldsmith has a mock dedication to the Tripoline ambassador. That there was not a similar envoy from Mujac (or Mujaco) appears probable from the fact that Emanuel Bowen reports that almost nothing is known of the country (*A Complete System of Geography* [1747], ii. 502).

³ 'Mais quand ils virent les Européens instruits en toute sorte de sciences, ils furent frappez d'étonnement. *Comment se peut-il faire*, disoient-ils, *que des gens si éloignez de nous, ayent de l'esprit & de la capacité? Jamais ils n'ont lû nos livres, ils n'en connoissent pas mesme les lettres; ils n'ont point esté formez par nos loix, & cependant ils parlent, ils raisonnent juste comme nous.*'

are pretty much alike. Different degrees of refinement, and not of distance, mark the distinctions among mankind. Savages of the most opposite climates, have all but one character of improvidence and rapacity; and tutored nations, however separate, make use of the
5 very same methods to procure refined enjoyment.

The distinctions of polite nations are few; but such as are peculiar to the Chinese, appear in every page of the following correspondence. The metaphors and allusions are all drawn from the East. Their formality our author carefully preserves. Many of their favourite
10 tenets in morals are illustrated. The Chinese are always concise, so is he. Simple, so is he. The Chinese are grave and sententious, so is he. But in one particular, the resemblance is peculiarly striking: the Chinese are often dull; and so is he. Nor has my assistance been wanting. We are told in an old romance of a certain knight errant
15 and his horse who contracted an intimate friendship. The horse most usually bore the knight, but, in cases of extraordinary dispatch, the knight returned the favour, and carried his horse. Thus in the intimacy between my author and me, he has usually given me a lift of his Eastern sublimity, and I have sometimes given him a return
20 of my colloquial ease.

Yet it appears strange in this season of panegyric, when scarce an author passes unpraised either by his friends or himself, that such merit as our Philosopher's should be forgotten. While the epithets of ingenious, copious, elaborate, and refined, are lavished
25 among the mob, like medals at a coronation, the lucky prizes fall on every side, but not one on him. I could on this occasion make myself melancholly, by considering the capriciousness of public taste, or the mutability of fortune; but during this fit of morality, lest my reader should sleep, I'll take a nap myself, and when I awake
30 tell him my dream.

I imagined the Thames was frozen over, and I stood by its side. Several booths were erected upon the ice, and I was told by one of the spectators, that FASHION FAIR was going to begin. He added, that every author who would carry his works there, might probably
35 find a very good reception. I was resolved however to observe the humours of the place in safety from the shore, sensible that ice was at best precarious, and having been always a little cowardly in my sleep.

Several of my acquaintance seemed much more hardy than I, and
40 went over the ice with intrepidity. Some carried their works to the

fair on sledges, some on carts, and those which were more voluminous, were conveyed in waggons. Their temerity astonished me. I knew their cargoes were heavy, and expected every moment they would have gone to the bottom. They all entered the fair, however, in safety, and each soon after returned to my great surprize, highly 5 satisfied with his entertainment, and the bargains he had brought away.

The success of such numbers at last began to operate upon me. If these, cried I, meet with favour and safety, some luck may, perhaps, for once attend the unfortunate. I am resolved to make 10 a new adventure. The furniture, frippery and fireworks of China, have long been fashionably bought up. I'll try the fair with a small cargo of Chinese morality. If the Chinese have contributed to vitiate our taste,¹ I'll try how far they can help to improve our understanding. But as others have driven into the market in waggons, 15 I'll cautiously begin by venturing with a wheel-barrow. Thus resolved, I baled up my goods and fairly ventured; when, upon just entering the fair, I fancied the ice that had supported an hundred waggons before, cracked under me; and wheel-barrow and all went to the bottom. 20

Upon awaking from my reverie, with the fright, I cannot help wishing that the pains taken in giving this correspondence an English dress, had been employed in contriving new political systems, or new plots for farces. I might then have taken my station in the world, either as a poet or a philosopher; and made one in those little 25 societies where men club to raise each others reputation. But at present I belong to no particular class. I resemble one of those solitary animals, that has been forced from its forest to gratify human curiosity. My earliest wish was to escape unheeded through life; but I have been set up for half-pence, to fret and scamper at 30 the end of my chain. Tho' none are injured by my rage, I am naturally too savage to court any friends by fawning. Too obstinate to be taught new tricks; and too improvident to mind what may happen, I am appeased, though not contented. Too indolent for intrigue, and too timid to push for favour, I am—But what signifies 35 what am I.

Ἐλπίς καὶ σὺ τύχῃ, μέγα χαίρετε· τὸν λιμέν' εἶδρον.

Οὐδὲν ἐμοὶ χ' ὑμῶν παύσετε τὸς μετ' ἐμέ.²

¹ On Chinese taste in England see Letter XIV below.

² *Greek Anthology*, ix. 49.

LETTERS

FROM A

CITIZEN of the WORLD¹

TO HIS

FRIENDS in the EAST.

LETTER I.²

[Introduction. A character of the Chinese Philosopher.]

To Mr. *****, merchant in London.

- SIR, *Amsterdam.*
 5 YOURS of the 13th instant, covering two bills, one on Messrs.
 R. and D. value 478 l. 10 s. and the other on Mr. *****, value
 285 l. duly came to hand, the former of which met with honour,
 but the other has been trifled with, and I am afraid will be returned
 protested.
 10 The bearer of this is my friend, therefore let him be yours. He
 is a native of Honan³ in China, and one who did me signal services
 when he was a mandarine, and I a factor at Canton. By frequently
 conversing with the English there, he has learned the language,
 though intirely a stranger to their manners and customs. I am told
 15 he is a philosopher,⁴ I am sure he is an honest man; that to you will

Title LETTERS FROM . . . the EAST.] 62; *om. PL*

4 *Amsterdam*] 62; *Amsterdam, Oct. 21, 1759 PL*

11 of Honan] 62; Leotung *PL*

12 at Canton] 62; in Canton *PL*

13 the English] *PL*; English 62

the language] 62; some of the language *PL*

14 their] 62; your *PL*

15 man;] 62; man, and *PL*

¹ For a list—which could be greatly extended—of earlier uses of the phrase ‘citizen of the world’ see Smith, pp. 29–31. For other uses by Goldsmith see the Index.

² With Letter II, in the *Public Ledger* for Thursday, 24 January 1760.

³ Ho-nan is the seventh province of the empire and ‘is situate almost in the middle of China’ (Du Halde, i. 102).

⁴ The use of the term ‘philosopher’ as equivalent to ‘citizen of the world’ is well illustrated in L. A. de La Beaumelle’s *Reflections of* ***** [a translation of *Mes Pensées*],

be his best recommendation, next to the consideration of his being
the Friend of, Sir, Yours, &c.

LETTER II.

[The arrival of the Chinese in London. His motives for the journey. Some
description of the streets and houses.]

5

Lond. From Lien Chi¹ Altangi to *****,
Merchant in Amsterdam.

Friend of my heart,

MAY the wings of peace rest upon thy dwelling, and the shield of
conscience preserve thee from vice and misery: for all thy favours
accept my gratitude and esteem, the only tributes a poor philosophic
wanderer² can return; sure fortune is resolved to make me unhappy,
when she gives others a power of testifying their friendship by
actions, and leaves me only words to express the sincerity of mine.

10

I am perfectly sensible of the delicacy by which you endeavour
to lessen your own merit and my obligations. By calling your late
instances of friendship only a return for former favours, you would
induce me to impute to your justice what I owe to your generosity.
The services I did you at Canton, justice, humanity, and my office
bade me perform; those you have done me since my arrival at

15

20

¹ his best] 62; the best *PL*

² the Friend of,] 62; my Friend. I am *PL*

¹⁰ vice and misery] 62; misery and vice *PL*

¹² wanderer] 62; wanderer like me *PL*

¹⁵ by which] 62; with which *PL*

¹⁶ obligations. By] 62; obligations, by *PL*

¹⁸ impute to . . . your generosity] 62; accept of ten times the equivalent *PL*

¹⁹ The] *PL*; par. 62 at Canton] 62; when at Canton, when I was the emperors
first slave *PL*

no. 38 (1753), p. 26: 'The philosopher disdains projects which aim only at the advantage
of his own nation . . .; he loves all mankind alike.

'The philosopher therefore has no country. He will be no philosopher if he had. He
does not sacrifice a remote kindred for one nearer. He does not forget relations out of
sight for those that are before his eyes: His heart takes in all virtues, and his progress
all mankind. . . . I will subscribe the following lines to the bottom of the picture of that
virtuous citizen of the world. . . .' Cf. also d'Argens, *Lettres juives*, lettre cxvi (iv. 330):
'Le Monde étant la Patrie des Philosophes, ils doivent être entièrement défaits de cette
basse & mauvaise Jalousie, qui regne entre les Personnes d'une différente Nation.'

¹ The name was probably suggested by Horace Walpole's short satire, *A Letter from
Xo Ho, a Chinese Philosopher at London, to his Friend Lien Chi at Peking*, which went
through five editions in 1757.

² Cf. 'A Letter from a Traveller' in the *Bee*, No. I: ' . . . out of my own country the
highest character I can ever acquire, is that of being a philosophic vagabond.'

Amsterdam, no laws obliged you to, no justice required, even half your favours would have been greater than my most sanguine expectations. The sum of money therefore which you privately conveyed into my baggage, when I was leaving Holland, and which I was
 5 ignorant of till my arrival in London, I must beg leave to return. You have been bred a merchant, and I a scholar; you consequently love money better than I. You can find pleasure in superfluity, I am perfectly contented with what is sufficient; take therefore what is yours, it may give you some pleasure, even though you have no
 10 occasion to use it; my happiness it cannot improve, for I have already all that I want.

My passage by sea from Rotterdam to England, was more painful to me than all the journies I ever made on land. I have traversed the immeasurable wilds of Mongul Tartary; felt all the rigours of
 15 Siberian skies; I have had my repose an hundred times disturbed by invading savages, and have seen without shrinking the desert sands rise like a troubled ocean all around me; against these calamities I was armed with resolution; but in my passage to England, though nothing occurred that gave the mariners any uneasiness, yet
 20 to one who was never at sea before, all was a subject of astonishment and terror. To find the land disappear, to see our ship mount the waves quick as an arrow from the Tartar bow, to hear the wind howling through the cordage, to feel a sickness which depresses even the spirits of the brave; these were unexpected distresses, and
 25 consequently assaulted me unprepared to receive them.

You men of Europe think nothing of a voyage by sea. With us of China, a man who has been from sight of land is regarded upon his return with admiration. I have known some provinces where there is not even a name for the ocean. What a strange people therefore
 30 am I got amongst, who have founded an empire on this unstable

1 even] 62; and even *PL*

3 The] *PL*; *par.* 62

6 I a] 62; I was educated a *PL*

7 I. You] 62; I: you *PL*

13 land.] 62; land; *PL*

15 I have had] 62; have had *PL*

17 against] 62; but against *PL*

18 but] 62; *om.* *PL*

21 terror. To] 62; terror; to *PL*

23 to feel] 62; and to feel *PL*

25 unprepared to receive them] 62; when of[f] my guard *PL*

26 sea. With] 62; sea; with *PL*

28 admiration] 62; admiration ever after *PL*

element, who build cities upon billows that rise higher than the mountains of Tipartala, and make the deep more formidable than the wildest tempest.

Such accounts as these, I must confess, were my first motives for seeing England. These induced me to undertake a journey of seven 5 hundred painful days, in order to examine its opulence, buildings, sciences, arts and manufactures on the spot. Judge then how great is my disappointment on entering London, to see no signs of that opulence so much talk'd of abroad; wherever I turn, I am presented with a gloomy solemnity in the houses, the streets and the in- 10 habitants; none of that beautiful gilding which makes a principal ornament in Chinese architecture. The streets of Nankin are sometimes strewed with gold leaf; very different are those of London: in the midst of their pavements a great lazy puddle moves muddily 15 along; heavy laden machines with wheels of unweildy thickness crowd up every passage, so that a stranger instead of finding time for observation, is often happy if he has time to escape from being crushed to pieces.¹ The houses borrow very few ornaments from architecture; their chief decoration seems to be a paltry piece of 20 painting, hung out at their doors or windows, at once a proof of their indigence and vanity. Their vanity in each having one of those pictures exposed to public view, and their indigence in being unable to get them better painted. In this respect, the fancy of their painters is also deplorable. Could you believe it? I have seen five black lions

2 Tipartala] 62; Taskuti PL

2-3 make the . . . wildest tempest] 62; give laws to kingdoms beneath the equator PL

4-5 confess, were . . . England. These] 62; confess it, was, that first gave me a desire to see England, that PL

6 its] 62; their PL

7 on the spot] 62; om. PL

8 is] 62; was PL

12 architecture. The] 62; architecture; the PL Nankin] 62; Pekin PL

14 pavements] 62; streets PL

18 The] PL; par. 62

20-21 at once . . . vanity. Their] 62; which at once evinces their vanity and their poverty; their PL

22 indigence] 62; poverty PL

23-24 In this . . . believe it?] 62; The fancy of their painters also is equally deplorable in this respect: you'll scarce believe me, when I assure you that PL

¹ The Chinese in the first paper of d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises* makes a similar observation about the streets of Paris: 'Le nombre des carosses est si grand, que les voitures s'arrêtent mutuellement les unes & les autres dans les rues; les gens qui sont obligés d'aller à pied, se glissent au travers des roues de tous ces chars prêts à les écraser' (i. 6-7).

and three blue boars in less than a circuit of half a mile; and yet you know that animals of these colours are no where to be found except in the wild imaginations of Europe. From these circumstances in their buildings, and from the dismal looks of the inhabitants,
 5 I am induced to conclude that the nation is actually poor; and that like the Persians, they make a splendid figure every where but at home.

The proverb of Xixofou is, that a man's riches may be seen in his eyes; if we judge of the English by this rule, there is not a poorer
 10 nation under the sun. I have been here but two days, so will not be hasty in my decisions; such letters as I shall write to Fipsihi¹ in Moscow, I beg you'll endeavour to forward with all diligence; I shall send them open, in order that you may take copies or translations, as you are equally versed in the Dutch and Chinese lan-
 15 guages. Dear friend, think of my absence with regret, as I sincerely regret yours; even while I write, I lament our separation. Farewell.

LETTER III.²

[The description of London continued. The luxury of the English. Its benefits. The fine gentleman. The fine lady.]

20 *From Lien Chi Altangi, to the care of Fipsihi, resident in Moscow; to be forwarded by the Russian caravan to Fum Hoam,³ first president of the ceremonial academy⁴ at Pekin in China.*

THINK not, O thou guide of my youth, that absence can impair my respect, or interposing trackless deserts blot your
 25 reverend figure from my memory. The farther I travel I feel the pain

3 the wild imaginations of Europe] 62; such wild imaginations PL From] PL; par. 62

4 the inhabitants] 62; some of the inhabitants PL

8 The] PL; no par. 62

9 of the English by this rule] 62; by this rule of the English PL

10 I have] PL; par. 62

14 versed in] 62; well acquainted with PL

15 as] 62; for PL

16 Farewell] 62; Adieu PL

20 *From Lien Chi Altangi, to*] 62; *To* PL resident] 62; *Tartarean resident* PL

24 or] 62; or that PL blot] 62; can blot PL

¹ Goldsmith had used Xixofou (see the preceding sentence) and Fipsihihi as Chinese names in his essay 'On the Instability of Worldly Grandeur' in the *Bee*, No. VI; there the names were derived from Voltaire (see above, I, p. 472, and n.).

² In the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 29 January 1760.

[For notes 3 & 4 see opposite.

of separation with stronger force, those ties that bind me to my native country, and you are still unbroken. By every remove, I only drag a greater length of chain.¹

Could I find ought worth transmitting from so remote a region as this to which I have wandered, I should gladly send it; but instead 5 of this, you must be contented with a renewal of my former professions, and an imperfect account of a people with whom I am as yet but superficially acquainted. The remarks of a man who has been but three days in the country can only be those obvious circumstances which force themselves upon the imagination: I consider myself here as a newly created being introduced into a new world, every object strikes with wonder and surprise.² The imagination, still unsated, seems the only active principle of the mind. The most trifling occurrences give pleasure, till the gloss of novelty is worn away. When I have ceased to wonder, I may possibly grow wise;³ 15 I may then call the reasoning principle to my aid, and compare

¹ stronger force] 62; more reluctance *PL*

² unbroken. By] 62; unbroken, while, by *PL*

7-8 am as yet] 62; yet am *PL*

¹² surprise. The] 62; surprise, the *PL*

¹³ unsated] 62; unsatiated *PL* mind. The] 62; mind; the *PL*

¹⁴ occurrences give] 62; occurrence gives *PL*

¹⁵ away. When . . . wonder, I may] 62; away, nor till we have ceased wondering can we *PL*

¹⁶ I may then] 62; it is then we *PL* my] 62; our *PL*

¹ Cf. Colley Cibber, *The Comical Lovers*, Act V (1754), p. 70:

'*Sab[ina]*. You have left your Heart with *Florimel*. . .

'*Cel[adon]*. You know you wrong me; when I am with *Florimel* 'tis still your Prisoner, it only draws a longer Chain after it.'

² The sentiments expressed in the last three sentences resemble quite closely those of the Chinese who has been but two days in Paris, described in the first letter of d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises* (i. 2).

³ Cf. the third paragraph of the chapter 'On Universities' in the *Enquiry*: 'A youth just landed at the Brille resembles a clown at a puppet-shew; carries his amazement from one miracle to another; . . . but wondering is not the way to grow wise.'

³ This name occurs in Thomas Simon Gueullette's *Les Aventures merveilleuses du Mandarin Fum-Hoam, contes chinois* (Paris, 1723), translated into English in 1725 as *Chinese Tales: or, the Wonderful Adventures of the Mandarin Fum-Hoam*. But if Goldsmith knew this work, his use of it appears not to have gone beyond the title.

⁴ Perhaps the Ceremonial Academy is the same as the 'third Supreme Court . . . call'd *Li-pu*' described by Du Halde (i. 249): 'It belongs to this Court, to see that Rites and Ceremonies be duly observ'd, and look after the Improvement of Arts and Sciences; it has also the Care of the Imperial Music, and examines those who are Candidates for Degrees. . . .'

those objects with each other which were before examined without reflection.

Behold me then in London gazing at the strangers, and they at me; it seems they find somewhat absurd in my figure; and had I
 5 been never from home it is possible I might find an infinite fund of ridicule in theirs; but by long travelling I am taught to laugh at folly alone, and to find nothing truly ridiculous but villainy and vice. When I had just quitted my native country, and crossed the Chinese wall, I fancied every deviation from the customs and manners of
 10 China was a departing from nature: I smiled at the blue lips and red foreheads of the Tonguese; and could hardly contain when I saw the Daures dress their heads with horns. The Ostiacs powdered with red earth, and the Calmuck beauties tricked out in all the finery of sheep-skin appeared highly ridiculous; but I soon perceived
 15 that the ridicule lay not in them but in me; that I falsely condemned others of absurdity, because they happened to differ from a standard originally founded in prejudice or partiality.¹

I find no pleasure therefore in taxing the English with departing from nature in their external appearance, which is all I yet know of
 20 their character; it is possible they only endeavour to improve her

1 were] 62; we PL

7 villainy and] 62; om. PL

8 When] PL; par. 62

9 fancied] 62; thought PL

11 Tonguese; and] 62; Tongusas; I PL

12 horns. The] 62; horns; the PL powdered] 62; powder their hair PL

13 earth,] earth; PL, 62 tricked] 62; trick PL

14 appeared highly ridiculous] 62; om. PL

15 me;] 62; me, and PL

16-17 a standard originally] 62; my standard of perfection, which was PL

¹ With the last two sentences cf. the remarks of the Chinese in Paris writing to his friend in China, in d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises*, lettre liii (ii. 235-6): 'Je l'avoue à ma honte, je fus à peine sorti des frontières de la Chine, que je condamnai tout ce que je vis d'opposé à nos maximes. . . . Enfin j'en suis venu, mais lentement & par degré, à sentir tout le ridicule de ce préjugé national. . . . Quelle confusion n'ai-je donc point ressentie, cher Yn-Che-Chan, lorsque me rappelant ma première façon de penser, j'ai aperçu qu'on auroit pû à juste titre m'adresser cette remontrance? "Imbécille Chinois, quelle n'est pas ton erreur! Tu méprises, tu condamnes tout ce qui n'est pas des usages de ta Nation; hé! ne vois-tu pas que tous les autres peuples du Monde, s'ils étoient aussi injustes & aussi prévenus que toi, mépriseroient, condamneroient avec une raison égale les mêmes usages qui seuls font l'objet de ton estime & de ta vénération?"' D'Argens's Chinese, in the account of his journey from China to Siberia, describes the 'Daures', the 'Tunguses', and the 'Ostiakes' in lettre xxviii (i. 261-70); but he does not ascribe to them the customs mentioned here, which may have been invented by Goldsmith.

simple plan, since every extravagance in dress proceeds from a desire of becoming more beautiful than nature made us: and this is so harmless a vanity that I not only pardon but approve it; a desire to be more excellent than others is what actually makes us so, and as thousands find a livelihood in society by such appetites, none 5 but the ignorant inveigh against them.

You are not insensible, most reverend Fum Hoam, what numberless trades, even among the Chinese, subsist by the harmless pride of each other. Your nose-borers, feet-swathers, tooth-stainers, eyebrow pluckers, would all want bread, should their neighbours want 10 vanity.¹ These vanities, however, employ much fewer hands in China than in England; and a fine gentleman, or a fine lady, here dressed up to the fashion, seems scarcely to have a single limb that does not suffer some distortions from art.

To make a fine gentleman, several trades are required, but chiefly 15 a barber: you have undoubtedly heard of the Jewish champion, whose strength lay in his hair; one would think that the English were for placing all wisdom there: To appear wise, nothing more is requisite here than for a man to borrow hair from the heads of all his neighbours, and clap it like a bush on his own: the distributors 20 of law and physic stick on such quantities, that it is almost impossible, even in idea, to distinguish between the head and the hair.

Those whom I have been now describing, affect the gravity of

1 dress] 62; our dress *PL*

2 and] 62; *om. PL*

10 neighbours want] 62; neighbours happen to want *PL*

11 These] 62; Those *PL*

12 and] 62; *om. PL*

13 seems] 62; seem *PL*

13-14 that does . . . from art] 62; or feature as nature has left it; they call in to their assistance fancy on every occasion, and think themselves finest when they most depart from what they really are *PL*

17 whose] 62; all whose *PL*

18 To appear wise] 62; in order to appear a wise man *PL*

19 here than for a man] 62; than *PL*

21 law and physic] 62; their laws *PL*

22 the head and the] 62; their heads and their *PL*

¹ Cf. a letter in the *World*, No. L (13 December 1753): 'I hear an ingenious gentleman is going within these few days to publish a treatise on Deformity. . . . A few books of travels will furnish him with abundant instances of head-moulders, face-squeezers, nose-parers, ear-stretchers, eye-painters, lip-borers, tooth-stainers, breast-cutters, foot-swathers, &c. &c. all modelled by fashion, none by taste.'

the lion; those I am going to describe more resemble the pert vivacity of smaller animals. The barber who is still master of the ceremonies cuts their hair close to the crown; and then with a composition of meal and hogs-lard, plaisters the whole in such a manner, 5 as to make it impossible to distinguish whether the patient wears a cap or a plaister; but to make the picture more perfectly striking, conceive the tail of some beast, a greyhound's tail, or a pigs tail for instance, appended to the back of the head, and reaching down to that place where tails in other animals are generally seen to begin; 10 thus betailed and bepowdered, the man of taste fancies he improves in beauty, dresses up his hard-featured face in smiles, and attempts to look hideously tender. Thus equipped, he is qualified to make love, and hopes for success more from the powder on the outside of his head, than the sentiments within.

15 Yet when I consider what sort of a creature the fine lady is to whom he is supposed to pay his addresses, it is not strange to find him thus equipped in order to please. She is herself every whit as fond of powder, and tails, and hogs lard as he; to speak my secret sentiments, most reverend Fum, the ladies here are horridly ugly; 20 I can hardly endure the sight of them; they no way resemble the beauties of China; the Europeans have a quite different idea of beauty from us; when I reflect on the small footed perfections of an Eastern beauty,¹ how is it possible I should have eyes for a woman whose feet are ten inches long. I shall never forget the beauties of

1-2 pert vivacity . . . animals. The] 62; tricks of the monkey; the *PL*

2 is still] 62; still seems *PL*

3 hair] 62; hair, not round the edges as with us, but *PL*

5 the patient] 62; he *PL*

6 but] 62; still *PL*

7 a greyhound's tail, or] 62; *om. PL*

8 the head] 62; his head *PL*

9 that] 62; the *PL* tails in other animals] 62; other tails *PL*

10 the man of taste] 62; he *PL*

15 I] 62; you *PL*

16 is supposed to pay] 62; pays *PL*

17 please. She] 62; please her; she *PL*

18 tails] 62; tails, and ribbands *PL*

22-23 an Eastern beauty] 62; thy charming daughter *PL*

23-3 (p. 25) a woman . . . black their] 62; any other personal excellence: how very broad her face; how very short her nose; how very little her eyes; how thin her lips; and how black her *PL*

¹ See the remark of a Chinese in d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises*, lettre ii (i. 12): 'Tu sais, Yn-Che-Chan, que parmi les agréments du sexe nous regardons la petitesse des pieds comme un des principaux'; and cf. Le Comte, i. 217, and Du Halde, i. 281.

my native city of Nangfew.¹ How very broad their faces; how very short their noses; how very little their eyes;² how very thin their lips; how very black their teeth; the snow on the tops of Bao is not fairer than their cheeks;³ and their eye-brows are as small as the line by the pencil of Quamsi. Here a lady with such perfections would be frightful; Dutch and Chinese beauties indeed have some resemblance, but English women are entirely different;⁴ red cheeks, big eyes, and teeth of a most odious whiteness are not only seen here, but wished for, and then they have such masculine feet, as actually serve *some* for walking!

Yet uncivil as nature has been, they seem resolved to outdo her in unkindness; they use white powder, blue powder, and black powder for their hair, and a red powder for the face on some particular occasions.⁵

They like to have the face of various colours, as among the Tartars of Koreki, frequently sticking on with spittle little black patches on

4 their cheeks; and their] 62; her cheek; and her *PL* as small] *PL*; small 62

4-5 the line . . . of Quamsi] 62; a thread of the finest silk *PL*

6 Dutch] 62; the Dutch *PL* indeed] 62; I own *PL*

7 English women] 62; the English ladies *PL*

8-9 not only . . . wished for] 62; every where to be seen *PL*

9 they have] 62; *om. PL*

10 *some*] 62; *some* of them *PL*

13-16 powder for their . . . frequently sticking] 62; powder, but never red powder, as among the Tartars in their hair; they paint their faces not less than the Calmucks, and stick *PL*

¹ Probably the same as Nang-yang-fu described by Du Halde (i. 103), the seventh city of the province of Ho-nan, of which Lien Chi Altangi is said to be a native in Letter I.

² See d'Argens, *Lettres chinoises*, lettre iv (i. 29): 'Nous faisons consister la beauté à avoir le front large, le nez court, les yeux petits, la face large & quarrée . . .'; and cf. Du Halde, i. 281, and Le Comte, i. 215.

³ Du Halde says of the Chinese: 'Their Complexion has been misrepresented by those who have seen only the Southern Parts of China; . . . in the other Provinces they are naturally as white as the Europeans . . .' (i. 281).

⁴ Goldsmith had shown his distaste for the beauties of Holland as compared with those of England ('of objects on this earth an English farmers Daughter is most charming') in a letter written from Leyden c. 6 May 1754 (*Collected Letters*, pp. 22-23).

⁵ Cf. the description of French ladies in *Lettres chinoises*, lettre ii (i. 9-10): 'Leur visage est presque toujours emprunté, elles l'ont fabriqué le matin avant de sortir de chez elles. Elles font un masque quit paroît fort beau, avec du blanc, du rouge, du bleu & du noir: ces deux dernières couleurs servent à peindre les veines & les sourcils; on emploie aussi le noir à changer les cheveux.'

every part of it, except on the tip of the nose, which I have never seen with a patch. You'll have a better idea of their manner of placing these spots, when I have finish'd a map of an English face patch'd up to the fashion, which shall shortly be sent to encrease
 5 your curious collection of paintings, medals and monsters.

But what surprizes more than all the rest, is, what I have just now been credibly informed by one of this country; "Most ladies here, says he, have two faces; one face to sleep in, and another to shew in company: the first is generally reserved for the husband and family
 10 at home, the other put on to please strangers abroad: the family face is often indifferent enough, but the out-door one looks something better; this is always made at the toilet, where the looking-glass, and toad-eater sit in council and settle the complexion of the day."¹

I can't ascertain the truth of this remark, however it is actually
 15 certain, that they wear more cloaths within doors than without; and I have seen a lady who seem'd to shudder at a breeze in her own apartment, appear half naked in the streets.² Farewell.

1 it, except on] 62; the face, except only *PL*

1-2 have never seen] 62; never see *PL*

2 patch] 62; patch on it *PL*

4 which shall . . . to encrease] 62; which, perhaps, I shall shortly send to add to *PL*

5 paintings] 62; beasts *PL*

6-7 But what . . . this country;] 62; Thus far I have seen, and I have now one of their own authors before me, who tells me something strange, and which I can hardly believe. His words are to this effect: *PL*

7-8 here, says he,] 62; in this country *PL*

9 first] 62; first face *PL*

10-12 the family . . . something better;] 62; *om. PL*

12 this] 62; this last *PL* where] 62; where whim, *PL*

13 toad-eater] 62; the toad-eater *PL*

14-15 it is actually certain, that] 62; they seem to me to act upon very odd principles upon another occasion, since *PL*

16 I have seen] 62; *om. PL* seem'd] 62; seems *PL*

17 appear] 62; appears *PL* the streets. Farewell.] 62; public. Adieu, LIEN CHI ALTANGI. *PL*

¹ With the last part of the sentence cf. *Lettres chinoises*, lettre ii (i. 10): 'La fantaisie d'une Françoise, son miroir, & les conseils de sa fille-de-chambre décident de la figure qu'elle doit avoir pendant la journée.'

² See a letter signed S. L. in the *World*, No. XXI (24 May 1753): '... it is the fashion for a lady to UNdress herself to go abroad, and to DRESS only when she stays at home and sees no company'; and cf. Goldsmith's poem 'The Double Metamorphosis' in the *Weekly Magazine* for 5 January 1760:

Tis true she dress'd with modern grace,
 Half naked at a ball or race;
 But when at home, at board or bed,
 Five greasy nightcaps wrap'd her head. . . .

LETTER IV.¹

[English pride. Liberty. An instance of both. News papers. Politeness.]

To the care of Fipsihi, Tartarean resident in Moscow; to be forwarded by the Russian caravan to Fum Hoam, first president of the ceremonial academy at Pekin in China.

THE English seem as silent as the Japonese, yet vainer than the inhabitants of Siam.² Upon my arrival I attributed that reserve to modesty, which I now find has its origin in pride. Condescend to address them first, and you are sure of their acquaintance; stoop to flattery and you conciliate their friendship and esteem. They bear 10 hunger, cold, fatigue, and all the miseries of life without shrinking, danger only calls forth their fortitude; they even exult in calamity, but contempt is what they cannot bear. An Englishman fears contempt more than death; he often flies to death as a refuge from its pressure; and dies when he fancies the world has ceased to esteem 15 him.

Pride seems the source not only of their national vices, but of their national virtues also.³ An Englishman is taught to love his king as his friend, but to acknowledge no other master than the laws which himself has contributed to enact. He despises those nations, 20 who, that one may be free, are all content to be slaves; who first lift a tyrant into terror, and then shrink under his power as if delegated from heaven. Liberty is echoed in all their assemblies, and thousands might be found ready to offer up their lives for the sound, though perhaps not one of all the number understands its 25

7 that] 62; their PL

8 has its origin] 62; had its original PL

13-14 An Englishman fears contempt] 62; Contempt an Englishman fears PL

15 and dies] 62; he dies PL

17 Pride] 62; This pride PL

20 which himself . . . to enact] 62; of his country PL

22 under] 62; beneath PL

25 the number] 62; that thousand PL

¹ From the *Public Ledger* of Thursday, 31 January 1760.

² This sentence is modelled on a sentence in the first paper of d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises* (i. 2): 'Les François . . . me paroissent aussi prévenus en leur faveur que les Japonois, aussi inconstans que les Tartares, & aussi spirituels que les Siamois.'

³ Cf. Goldsmith's 'Memoirs of M. de Voltaire' (probably written by the beginning of 1759, though not published until 1761): 'Voltaire quickly perceived that pride seemed to be our characteristic quality; a source from whence we derived our excellencies as well as our defects.'

meaning. The lowest mechanic however looks upon it as his duty to be a watchful guardian of his countries freedom, and often uses a language that might seem haughty, even in the mouth of the great emperor who traces his ancestry to the moon.

- 5 A few days ago, passing by one of their prisons, I could not avoid stopping, in order to listen to a dialogue which I thought might afford me some entertainment. The conversation was carried on between a debtor through the grate of his prison, a porter, who had stopped to rest his burthen, and a soldier at the window. The
10 subject was upon a threatened invasion from France, and each seemed extremely anxious to rescue his country from the impending danger. "For my part, cries the prisoner, the greatest of my apprehensions is for our freedom; if the French should conquer, what would become of English liberty. My dear friends, liberty is the
15 Englishman's prerogative; we must preserve that at the expence of our lives, of that the French shall never deprive us; it is not to be expected that men who are slaves themselves would preserve our freedom should they happen to conquer." "Ay, slaves, cries the
20 porter, they are all slaves, fit only to carry burthens every one of them. Before I would stoop to slavery, may this be my poison (and he held the goblet in his hand) may this be my poison—but I would sooner list for a soldier."

The soldier taking the goblet from his friend, with much awe fervently cried out, "It is not so much our liberties as our religion
25 that would suffer by such a change: ay, our religion, my lads. May the devil sink me into flames, (such was the solemnity of his adjuration) if the French should come over, but our religion would be utterly undone."¹ So saying, instead of a libation, he applied the

4 traces his ancestry to] 62; claims kindred with *PL*

5 ago,] 62; ago as I was *PL*

8-9 porter, who . . . his burthen,] 62; porter *PL*

10 upon] 62; *om. PL* each] 62; all *PL*

11 to rescue . . . from the] 62; how to rescue their country from *PL*

12-13 apprehensions] 62; apprehension *PL*

24-25 "It is . . . religion that] 62; not our liberties, but our religion *PL*

25 lads. May] 62; friends; for may *PL*

27-28 but our . . . undone." So] 62; what would then become of our religion; so *PL*

¹ With this sentence cf. the question of a shoemaker in Goldsmith's essay on popular rejoicings for victory in the *Busy Body* for 20 October 1759: ' . . . if the French papishes had come over, d—n my blood what would become of our religion?' (III, p. 19, below). The exclamation 'may this be my poison' in the last sentence of the preceding paragraph appears in the same essay.

goblet to his lips, and confirmed his sentiments with a ceremony of the most persevering devotion.¹

In short, every man here pretends to be a politician; even the fair sex are sometimes found to mix the severity of national altercation, with the blandishments of love, and often become conquerors 5 by more weapons of destruction than their eyes.

This universal passion for politics is gratified by Daily Gazettes, as with us at China. But as in ours, the emperor endeavours to instruct his people, in theirs the people endeavour to instruct the administration. You must not, however, imagine that they who 10 compile these papers have any actual knowledge of the politics, or the government of a state; they only collect their materials from the oracle of some coffee-house, which oracle has himself gathered them the night before from a beau at a gaming table, who has pillaged his knowledge from a great man's porter, who has had 15

1 lips] 62; head *PL*

1-2 a ceremony of the most persevering] 62; every ceremony of sincere *PL*

3 politician;] 62; politician, and *PL*

5-6 love, and . . . their eyes.] 62; love; in order to indulge this universal propensity, each day there appears several broad leaves of paper, written all over with politics and hieroglyphics; and, in order to see these, the tradesmen leave their shops, with a curiosity not unlike that with which our artizans of China run out to see the emperor giving a spectacle of paper kites. When the populace have sufficiently gazed at one paper, there is another clapped up in its stead, and instead of a lanthorn at the tail, as in China, they sometimes furnish their papers with an eclipse, or a blazing star. *PL*

7-10 This universal . . . not, however,] 62; But you must not *PL*

12 a state] 62; the state they live in *PL*

13-14 oracle has himself gathered them] 62; the oracle himself has gathered *PL*

15 pillaged] 62; himself pillaged *PL*

¹ Gibbs (*Works*, iii. 22) has called attention to the striking similarity between the preceding conversation and one in John Byrom's poem 'Tom the Porter', which also takes place between a soldier, a porter, and a debtor at the grate of his prison. In the following passage the similarity is closest:

The Soldier, touch'd a little with Surprise
To see his Friend's Indifference, replies:
"What you say, *Tom*, I own, is very good,
But—OUR RELIGION!" and he d—n'd his Blood—
"What will become of OUR RELIGION?"—"True!"
Says the Jail-Bird; "and of our FREEDOM too?
If the PRETENDER," rapt he out, "comes on,
OUR LIBERTIES AND PROPERTIES are gone!"

(*The Poems of John Byrom*, ed. A. W. Ward, vol. i, pt. ii [Manchester, 1894], p. 300.) Byrom's poems were not collected until 1773, but this poem, according to Ward, appeared in the *Chester Courant* of 25 November 1746 and was reprinted in *Manchester Vindicated* (1749).

his information from the great man's gentleman, who has invented the whole story for his own amusement the night preceding.

The English in general seem fonder of gaining the esteem than the love of those they converse with: this gives a formality to their amuse-
 5 ments; their gayest conversations have something too wise for innocent relaxation; though in company you are seldom disgusted with the absurdity of a fool; you are seldom lifted into rapture by those strokes of vivacity which give instant, though not permanent pleasure. What they want, however, in gaiety, they make up in polite-
 10 ness. You smile at hearing me praise the English for their politeness: you who have heard very different accounts from the missionaries at Pekin, who have seen such a different behaviour in their merchants and seamen at home. But I must still repeat it, the English seem more polite than any of their neighbours: their great art in
 15 this respect lies in endeavouring, while they oblige, to lessen the force of the favour. Other countries are fond of obliging a stranger; but seem desirous that he should be sensible of the obligation. The English confer their kindness with an appearance of indifference, and give away benefits with an air as if they despised them. Walking
 20 a few days ago between an English and a Frenchman into the suburbs of the city, we were overtaken by a heavy shower of rain. I was unprepared; but they had each large coats, which defended them from what seemed to me a perfect inundation. The Englishman seeing me shrink from the weather, accosted me thus: "Psha, man,
 25 what dost shrink at; here, take this coat; I don't want it; I find it no way useful to me; I had as lief be without it." The Frenchman began to shew his politeness in turn. "My dear friend," cries he, "why wont you oblige me by making use of my coat; you see how well it defends me from the rain; I should not chuse to part with it

1 has invented] 62; himself has invented *PL*

8-9 instant, though not permanent pleasure] 62; instant pleasure, however they may pall upon recollection *PL*

9 What] *PL*; *par.* 62

9-10 in politeness] 62; by politeness *PL*

10 You] 62; I know you *PL*

12 who have seen] 62; and have seen *PL*

13 home. But] 62; Canton; but *PL*

15 endeavouring] 62; their endeavouring *PL*

16 a stranger] 62; strangers *PL*

17 seem] 62; then they seem *PL* he] 62; you *PL*

18 appearance] 62; air *PL*

19 with an air . . . despised them] 62; which they seem to despise *PL*
 ing] *PL*; *par.* 62

Walk-

to others, but to such a friend as you, I could even part with my skin to do him service." From such minute instances as these, most reverend Fum Hoam, I am sensible your sagacity will collect instruction. The volume of nature is the book of knowledge; and he becomes most wise who makes the most judicious selection. Farewell.

5

LETTER V.¹

[English passion for politics. A specimen of a news paper. Characteristic of the manners of different countries.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

10

I Have already informed you of the singular passion of this nation for politics. An Englishman not satisfied with finding by his own prosperity the contending powers of Europe properly balanced, desires also to know the precise value of every weight in either scale. To gratify this curiosity, a leaf of political instruction is served up every morning with tea; when our politician has feasted upon this, he repairs to a coffee-house, in order to ruminate upon what he has read, and encrease his collection; from thence he proceeds to the ordinary, enquires what news, and treasuring up every acquisition there, hunts about all the evening in quest of more, and carefully adds it to the rest. Thus at night he retires home full of the important advices of the day. When lo! awaking next morning, he finds the instructions of yesterday a collection of absurdity or palpable falsehood. This, one would think, a mortifying repulse in the pursuit of wisdom; yet our politician no way discouraged, hunts on, in order to collect fresh materials, and in order to be again disappointed.

25

I have often admired the commercial spirit which prevails over

² From] *PL*; *par.* 62

⁵ Farewell.] 62; Adieu. LIEN CHI ALTANGI. *PL*

¹⁶ feasted] 62; sufficiently feasted *PL*

¹⁹ ordinary, enquires] 62; ordinary enquiry *PL*

¹⁹⁻²⁰ acquisition there . . . quest of] 62; acquisition, at the tavern he learns *PL*

²¹ rest. Thus at night] 62; rest; from whence *PL*

²² When lo! awaking] 62; Awaking *PL*

²³⁻²⁴ falsehood. This] 62; falsehood; this *PL*

²⁶ in order to be] 62; to be *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Thursday, 7 February 1760.

Europe; have been surprized to see them carry on a traffic with productions, that an Asiatic stranger would deem entirely useless. It is a proverb in China, that an European suffers not even his spittle to be lost; the maxim, however, is not sufficiently strong; 5 since they sell even their lies to great advantage. Every nation drives a considerable trade in this commodity with their neighbours.

An English dealer in this way, for instance, has only to ascend to his work-house, and manufacture a turbulent speech averred to be spoken in the senate; or a report supposed to be dropt at court; 10 a piece of scandal that strikes at a popular Mandarin; or a secret treaty between two neighbouring powers. When finished, these goods are baled up, and consigned to a factor abroad, who sends in return, two battles, three sieges, and a shrewd letter filled with dashes—blanks and stars **** of great importance.

15 Thus you perceive, that a single gazette is the joint manufacture of Europe; and he who would peruse it with a philosophical eye, might perceive in every paragraph something characteristick of the nation to which it belongs. A map does not exhibit a more distinct view of the boundaries and situation of every country, than its news 20 does a picture of the genius, and the morals of its inhabitants. The superstition and erroneous delicacy of Italy, the formality of Spain, the cruelty of Portugal, the fears of Austria, the confidence of Prussia, the levity of France, the avarice of Holland, the pride of England, the absurdity of Ireland, and the national partiality of 25 Scotland, are all conspicuous in every page. But, perhaps, you may find more satisfaction in a real news paper, than in my description of one; I therefore send a specimen which may serve to exhibit the

5 advantage. Every] 62; advantage; and every *PL*

7 An English . . . instance, has] 62; For instance, suppose I am an English dealer in this way; I have *PL*

7-8 to his] 62; my *PL*

8 manufacture] 62; manufacturing *PL*

9 or] 62; *om.* *PL*

10 or] 62; *om.* *PL*

11 powers] 62; powers; a piece of murder; a piece of criticism; and an horse race *PL*

12 a factor] 62; my factor *PL* sends] 62; sends me *PL*

13 sieges] 62; sieges, an inundation *PL*

14 great importance] 62; double meaning *PL*

15 gazette] 62; news paper *PL*

17 might] 62; could *PL*

25 every page.] 62; those diurnal publications *PL* But] *PL*; *par.* 62

27 therefore send a specimen] 62; shall therefore produce a specimen of a news paper *PL* serve] 62; serve at once *PL*

manner of their being written, and distinguish the characters of the various nations which are united in its composition.

NAPLES. We have lately dug up here a curious Etruscan monument, broke in two in the raising. The characters are scarce visible; but *Nugosi*, the learned antiquary supposes it to have been erected 5 in honour of *Picus*, a Latin king, as one of the lines may be plainly distinguished to begin with a P. It is hoped this discovery will produce something valuable, as the literati of our twelve academies are deeply engaged in the disquisition.

PISA. Since father Fudgi, prior of St. Gilbert's, has gone to reside 10 at Rome, no miracles have been performed at the shrine of St. Gilbert: the devout begin to grow uneasy, and some begin actually to fear that St. Gilbert has forsaken them with the reverend father.

LUCCA. The administrators of our serene republic, have frequent conferences upon the part they shall take in the present commotions 15 of Europe. Some are for sending a body of their troops, consisting of one company of foot, and six horsemen, to make a diversion in favour of the empress-queen; others are as strenuous asserters of the Prussian interest: what turn these debates may take, time only can discover. However, certain it is, we shall be able to bring into the 20 field, at the opening of the next campaign, seventy-five armed men, a commander in chief, and two drummers of great experience.

SPAIN. Yesterday the new king shewed himself to his subjects, and after having staid half an hour in his balcony, retired to the royal apartment. The night concluded on this extraordinary occasion with 25 illuminations, and other demonstrations of joy.¹

1 their being written] 62; writing *PL*

2 which are . . . its composition] 62; by which it is compos'd *PL*

3 NAPLES] 62; ITALY *PL* have] 62; have had *PL*

4 broke] 62; though broke *PL* characters] 62; characters, it is true, *PL*

5 *Nugosi*] 62; *Gimeracci PL*

6 a Latin king] 62; one of the Latin kings *PL*

13 with the reverend father] 62; *om. PL*

16-17 troops, consisting . . . six horsemen,] 62; troops *PL*

18 others] 62; and others *PL*

20-21 be able . . . the field] 62; send *PL*

21 the next campaign,] 62; next campaign, into the field *PL*

22 drummers] 62; drums *PL*

¹ See the *Gentleman's Magazine*, xxix (1759), 488: 'The Catholick king, *Charles* the III^d, was proclaimed on *Tuesday* the 11th of *September*, at *Madrid*, with the usual ceremonies, . . . and the people shewed the utmost satisfaction by their repeated acclamations: That night there were fire works; the two succeeding days there were bull feasts; . . . and during those nights there were illuminations in that capital.'

The queen is more beautiful than the rising sun, and reckoned one of the first wits in Europe: she had a glorious opportunity of displaying the readiness of her invention, and her skill in repartee lately at court. The duke of Lerma, coming up to her with a low
 5 bow and a smile, and presenting a nosegay set with diamonds, Madam, cries he, I'm your most obedient humble servant. Oh, sir, replies the queen, (without any prompter, or the least hesitation) I'm very proud of the very great honour you do me. Upon which she made a low curtesy, and all the courtiers fell a laughing at the
 10 readiness and the smartness of her reply.

LISBON. Yesterday we had an *auto da fe*, at which were burned three young women accused of heresy, one of them of exquisite beauty;¹ two Jews, and an old woman, convicted of being a witch: one of the friars, who attended this last, reports, that he saw the devil fly out of
 15 her at the stake in the shape of a flame of fire. The populace behaved on this occasion with great good humour, joy, and sincere devotion.

Our *merciful sovereign* has been for some time past recovered of his fright: though so atrocious an attempt deserved to exterminate half the nation, yet he has been graciously pleased to spare the lives
 20 of his subjects, and not above five hundred have been broke upon the wheel, or otherwise executed upon this horrid occasion.²

VIENNA. We have received certain advices that a party of twenty

1 more beautiful . . . rising sun] 62; very beautiful PL

3 her skill] 62; skill PL

4 lately at court] 62; at court a few nights ago PL

5 presenting] 62; presenting her PL

6 I'm] PL; I am 62

8 me. Upon] 62; me; upon PL

10 and the smartness] 62; om. PL

12 accused of heresy] 62; that were heretics PL

16 humour, joy,] 62; humour PL

17 *merciful sovereign*] 62; no italics PL

20 five] 62; two PL

21 horrid] 62; om. PL

¹ In *Lettres chinoises*, at the beginning of lettre lxvi (ii. 371-2), d'Argens gives an account of a recent execution at Lisbon: 'Les Inquisiteurs de la Foi . . . ont fait bruler quatorze personnes, parmi lesquelles il y avoit deux jeunes filles âgées de dix-huit ans, & une femme de vingt-deux. . . ' And in *Lettres juives*, lettre c (iv. 121), he quotes an account where the beauty of a young woman is emphasized: 'Parmi les Juifs qu'on brula, il y avoit une jeune Fille, qui ne paroissoit pas avoir dix-sept Ans. . . Elle étoit d'une Beauté merveilleuse.'

² For the attempt to assassinate the King of Portugal in 1758 and the subsequent execution of the conspirators, see the *Gentleman's Magazine*, xxviii (1758), 500, 549, and xxix (1759), 39, 74-79, 90.

thousand Austrians, having attacked a much superior body of Prussians, put them all to flight, and took the rest prisoners of war.

BERLIN. We have received certain advices that a party of twenty thousand Prussians, having attacked a much superior body of Austrians, put them to flight, and took a great number of prisoners, 5 with their military chest, cannon, and baggage.

Though we have not succeeded this campaign to our wishes; yet, when we think of him who commands us, we rest in security: while we sleep, our king is watchful for our safety.

PARIS. We shall soon strike a signal blow. We have seventeen 10 flat-bottom'd boats at Havre.¹ The people are in excellent spirits, and our ministers make no difficulty of raising the supplies.

We are all undone; the people are discontented to the last degree; the ministers are obliged to have recourse to the most rigorous 15 methods to raise the expences of the war.

Our distresses are great; but madam Pompadour continues to supply our king, who is now growing old, with a fresh lady every night. His health, thank heaven, is still pretty well; nor is he in the least unfit, as was reported, for any kind of royal exercitation. He was so frightened at the affair of Damien, that his physicians were 20 apprehensive lest his reason should suffer, but that wretch's tortures soon composed the kingly terrors of his breast.²

ENGLAND. Wanted an usher to an academy. *N.B.* He must be able to read, dress hair, and must have had the small pox.

18-19 in the least] 62; the least *PL*

19 exercitation] 62; amusement *PL*

22 the kingly . . . his breast] 62; his kingly terrors *PL*

23-24 Wanted an . . . small pox.] 62; There was a great concourse of nobility this season at Newmarket. The French are preparing to invade us from Havre. Those, however, are only the efforts of a sinking nation; for admiral Hawke has come up with them, and drubbed them heartily. There will be a great route this evening at the house of her grace the dutchess of Birmingham. *PL*

¹ The *Gentleman's Magazine* for May 1759 (xxix. 240) reported that 'great preparations are making on the coasts of *Upper Normandy* and *Picardy* for an embarkation for *England*, not less than 3000 hands being employed in finishing flat-bottomed boats in those provinces to facilitate a descent'; and the number for June (xxix. 288) said that 'Two thousand workmen are employed at *Havre de Grace*, in building 150 flat bottomed boats'. The *London Magazine* for July 1759, however, reported that at *Havre de Grace* there were 'but 30 of the flat-bottomed boats finished . . . and about 20 more on the stocks' and that none were being built in other ports (xxviii. 382-3).

² For Damien's attempt to assassinate Louis XV on 6 January 1757 and his subsequent torture and execution, see the *Gentleman's Magazine*, xxvii (1757), 40, 42, 87-88, 151.

DUBLIN. We hear that there is a benevolent subscription on foot among the nobility and gentry of this kingdom, who are great patrons of merit, in order to assist Black and All Black, in his contest with the Padderen mare.¹

- 5 We hear from Germany that prince Ferdinand² has gained a complete victory, and taken twelve kettle drums, five standards, and four waggons of ammunition prisoners of war.

EDINBURGH. We are positive, when we say that Saunders M'Gregor, who was lately executed for horse-stealing, is not a
10 Scotchman, but born in Carrickfergus. Farewell.

LETTER VI.³

[Happiness lost, by seeking after refinement. The Chinese philosopher's disgraces.]

- Fum Hoam, first president of the ceremonial academy at Peking, to Lien Chi Altangi, the discontented wanderer; by the way of Moscow.*
15

WHETHER sporting on the flowery banks of the river Irtis,⁴
or scaling the steepy mountains of Douchenour: Whether

2-3 who are . . . of merit] 62; and that there is five hundred pounds already actually on foot *PL*

3 assist] 62; encourage *PL*

3-4 in his contest with] 62; and *PL*

4 mare.] 62; mare. They are to start on the Curragh. *PL*

6 taken] 62; has taken *PL*

7 war.] 62; war. The match between Laughin O'Swiney, esq; and miss Cicely Morrogho, who were married in our last, is entirely broke off. *PL*

10 Farewell.] 62; *om. PL*

¹ According to the researches of Michael F. Cox (*Notes and Queries*, 8th ser., ix [1896], 461-2), Black and All Black was the nickname of Othello, who won, among other races, those at the Curragh in Ireland in 1750 and 1751, and the 'Padderen mare' was the nickname of Irish Lass, who won at the Curragh in 1745 and 1748. Cox has found no evidence that the two ever ran against each other. Cf. Goldsmith's letter of 27 December 1757 to Daniel Hodson in Ireland: ' . . . there has been more [money] spent in the encouragement of the Podareen mare there [in on]e season, than given in rewards to learned men since [the ti]mes of Usher' (*Collected Letters*, p. 29).

² Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick was much in the news during 1759 for his successes, with the aid of British troops, against the Imperial and French armies (see the *London Magazine*, xxviii [1759], 222, 398, 438, 497, 509). In October he was installed a Knight of the Garter at his camp in Germany (*ibid.*, p. 617).

³ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 1 February 1760.

⁴ In the account of his journey from China to Moscow a Chinese in d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises* describes 'une rivière, appelée Irtis' in Siberia (i. 288). The 'flowery banks' appear to be Goldsmith's invention.

traversing the black desert of Kobi, or giving lessons of politeness to the savage inhabitants of Europe. In whatever country, whatever climate, and whatever circumstances, all hail! May Tien, the universal soul,¹ take you under his protection, and inspire you with a superior portion of himself.

How long, my friend, shall an enthusiasm for knowledge continue to obstruct your happiness, and tear you from all the connexions that make life pleasing? How long will you continue to rove from climate to climate, circled by thousands, and yet without a friend, feeling all the inconveniencies of a croud, and all the anxiety of being alone?²

I know you will reply, that the refined pleasure of growing every day wiser is a sufficient recompence for every inconvenience. I know you will talk of the vulgar satisfaction of soliciting happiness from sensual enjoyment only; and probably enlarge upon the exquisite raptures of sentimental bliss. Yet, believe me friend, you are deceived; all our pleasures, though seemingly never so remote from sense, derive their origin from some one of the senses. The most exquisite demonstration in mathematics, or the most pleasing disquisition in metaphysics, if it does not ultimately tend to increase some sensual satisfaction, is delightful only to fools, or to men who have by long habit contracted a false idea of pleasure; and he who separates sensual and sentimental enjoyments, seeking happiness from mind alone, is in fact as wretched as the naked inhabitant of the forest, who places all happiness in the first, regardless of the latter. There are two extremes in this respect; the savage who swallows down the draught of pleasure without staying to reflect on his happiness, and

¹ desert] *PL*; deserts 62

¹¹ being alone] 62; solitude *PL*

¹²⁻¹³ every day wiser] 62; wiser every day *PL*

²² pleasure; and he] 62; pleasure. The man *PL*, with *par*.

²³ seeking] 62; and seeks *PL*

¹ Cf. the allusions in *ibid.*: 'Par les mots de *Chang-ti* & de *Tien* je n'entends point, comme le vulgaire des Chinois, le ciel visible & matériel; mais un Esprit souverain, indépendant de la matière, qui la vivifie par sa puissance, & qui lui donne les différentes formes qu'elle prend' (i. 48); 'L'Etre suprême, le *Tien*, le Seigneur du Ciel' (ii. 106); 'L'Etre suprême, le principe éternel, que nous reconnoissons sous le nom de *Tien*, & les Européens sous celui de *Dieu*' (iv. 136).

² Cf. 'A Letter from a Traveller' in the *Bee*, No. I: 'When will my wanderings be at an end? When will my restless disposition give me leave to enjoy the present hour? . . . Secluded from all the comforts of confidence, friendship, or society, I feel the solitude of an hermit, but not his ease.'

the sage who passeth the cup while he reflects on the conveniencies of drinking.

It is with an heart full of sorrow, my dear Altangi, that I must inform you that what the world calls happiness must now be yours
 5 no longer. Our great emperor's displeasure at your leaving China, contrary to the rules of our government, and the immemorial custom of the empire, has produced the most terrible effects. Your wife, daughter, and the rest of your family have been seized by his order, and appropriated to his use; all except your son are now the
 10 peculiar property of him who possesses all; him I have hidden from the officers employ'd for this purpose; and even at the hazard of my life I have conceal'd him. The youth seems obstinately bent on finding you out, wherever you are; he is determined to face every danger that opposes his pursuit. Though yet but fifteen, all his
 15 father's virtues and obstinacy sparkle in his eyes, and mark him as one destined to no mediocrity of fortune.

You see, my dearest friend, what imprudence has brought thee to; from opulence, a tender family, surrounding friends, and your master's esteem, it has reduced thee to want, persecution; and still
 20 worse, to our mighty monarch's displeasure. Want of prudence is too frequently the want of virtue; nor is there on earth a more powerful advocate for vice than poverty. As I shall endeavour to guard thee from the one, so guard thyself from the other; and still think of me with affection and esteem. Farewell.

4-5 what the . . . longer. Our] 62; all your happiness is now at an end; our *PL*

6 our government,] 62; government; *PL*

7 empire,] 62; empire *PL*

8 daughter] 62; your daughter *PL*

12 The youth] 62; He *PL*

13-14 to face . . . opposes his] 62; against every danger in the *PL*

20 to our] 62; our *PL* Want] 62; Believe me that want *PL*

21 too] 62; most *PL*

22 for vice than poverty] 62; than misery for vice *PL*

24 Farewell] 62; Adieu *PL*

LETTER VII.¹

[The tie of wisdom, only to make us happy. The benefits of travelling upon the morals of a philosopher.]

*From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Cere-
monial Academy at Peking, in China.*

5

The Editor thinks proper to acquaint the reader, that the greatest part of the following letter, seems to him to be little more than a rhapsody of sentences borrowed from Confucius, the Chinese philosopher.

A Wife, a daughter carried into captivity to expiate my offence,
a son scarce yet arrived at maturity, resolving to encounter
every danger in the pious pursuit of one who has undone him, these
indeed are circumstances of distress; tho' my tears were more
precious than the gem of Golconda, yet would they fall upon such
an occasion.

10

But I submit to the stroke of heaven, I hold the volume of Con-
fucius in my hand, and as I read grow humble and patient, and wise.
We should feel sorrow, says he, but not sink under its oppression,
the heart of a wise man should resemble a mirror, which reflects
every object without being sullied by any. The wheel of fortune
turns incessantly round, and who can say within himself I shall to
day be uppermost.² We should hold the immutable mean that lies
between insensibility and anguish; our attempts should be not to
extinguish nature, but to repress it; not to stand unmoved at distress,
but endeavour to turn every disaster to our own advantage. Our
greatest glory is, not in never falling, but in rising every time we
fall.³

15

20

25

I fancy myself at present, O thou reverend disciple of Tao,⁴ more

8 borrowed] 62; om. PL

15 the volume] 62; this volume PL

16-17 wise. We] 62; wise; we PL

24-26 Our greatest . . . we fall.] 62; om. PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Monday, 4 February 1760.

² With this sentence cf. the reflection of 'a Modern Philosopher of China' in Du Halde, ii. 48: 'The Wheel of Fortune is in a continual Rotation. Can you promise to be a long time prosperous?'

³ This is the twelfth maxim of Confucius given by Le Comte, i. 350: 'Dans l'état où nous sommes, la persévérance dans le bien consiste moins à ne pas tomber, qu'à se relever toutes les fois qu'on tombe.'

⁴ It is possible that, as Gibbs suggests (*Works*, iii. 31), Goldsmith refers to the sect of Tau Tse, discussed by Du Halde, i. 648-9. But since the sect is described in very unfavourable terms, it is more probable that Goldsmith has merely invented a master for Fum Hoam.

than a match for all that can happen; the chief business of my life has been to procure wisdom, and the chief object of that wisdom was to be happy. My attendance on your lectures, my conferences with the missionaries of Europe, and all my subsequent adventures
 5 upon quitting China, were calculated to encrease the sphere of my happiness, not my curiosity. Let¹ European travellers cross seas and deserts merely to measure the height of a mountain, to describe the cataract of a river, or tell the commodities which every country may produce; merchants or geographers, perhaps, may find profit by
 10 such discoveries, but what advantage can accrue to a philosopher from such accounts, who is desirous of understanding the human heart, who seeks to know the *men* of every country, who desires to discover those differences which result from climate, religion, education, prejudice, and partiality.

15 I should think my time very ill bestowed, were the only fruits of my adventures to consist in being able to tell, that a tradesman of London lives in an house three times as high as that of our great emperor; that the ladies wear longer cloaths than the men, that the priests are dressed in colours which we are taught to detest, and
 20 that their soldiers wear scarlet, which is with us the symbol of peace and innocence. How many travellers are there, who confine their relations to such minute and useless particulars; for one who enters into the genius of those nations with whom he has conversed, who discloses their morals, their opinions, the ideas which they entertain
 25 of religious worship, the intrigues of their ministers, and their skill in the sciences; there are twenty, who only mention some idle particulars, which can be of no real use to a true philosopher. All their remarks tend, neither to make themselves nor others more happy;

4 missionaries of] 62; missionaries, from *PL*

6 not my] 62; not of my *PL*

7 to measure] 62; in order to measure *PL*

9 may find] 62; will find *PL*

14 partiality] 62; custom *PL*

18 emperor; that] emperor of China; that *PL*; Emperor. That 62

20-21 peace and innocence] 62; innocence and peace *PL*

25 of their ministers, and] 62; and cabals of their ministers and clergy, *PL*

26 the sciences; there] *PL*; sciences. There 62 twenty] 62; twenty others *PL*
 idle] 62; *om.* *PL*

28 nor] 62; or *PL*

¹ From this point through the next paragraph and the first sentence of the one following Goldsmith makes a fairly close translation of a passage from d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises*, lettre lxxix (iii. 146-8).

they no way contribute to control their passions, to bear adversity, to inspire true virtue, or raise a detestation of vice.

Men may be very learned, and yet very miserable; it is easy to be a deep geometrician, or a sublime astronomer, but very difficult to be a good man; I esteem, therefore, the traveller who instructs the heart, but despise him who only indulges the imagination; a man who leaves home to mend himself and others is a philosopher; but he who goes from country to country, guided by the blind impulse of curiosity, is only a vagabond. From Zerdusht down to him of Tyanea, I honour all those great names who endeavoured to unite the world by their travels;¹ such men grew wiser as well as better, the farther they departed from home, and seemed like rivers whose streams are not only encreased but refined, as they travel from their source.

For my own part, my greatest glory is, that travelling has not more steeled my constitution against all the vicissitudes of climate, and all the depressions of fatigue, than it has my mind against the accidents of fortune, or the accessions of despair. Farewell.

LETTER VIII.²

[The Chinese deceived by a prostitute, in the streets of London.] 20

*From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Cere-
monial Academy at Pekin, in China.*

HOW insupportable! oh thou possessor of heavenly wisdom, would be this separation, this immeasurable distance from my friends, were I not able thus to delineate my heart upon paper, and 25

1 they] 62; om. PL

7 leaves home] 62; travels PL

15-18 For my . . . of despair.] 62; om. PL

18 Farewell.] 62; Adieu. PL, concluding the preceding par.

23 possessor] 62; partaker PL

¹ 'Zoroastre, que les Perses appellent *Zerdusht* ou *Zaratush*, . . . passa ensuite jusques dans les Indes pour y apprendre les Sciences des Brachmanes; & ayant pénétré ce qu'ils savoient de Métaphysique, de Physique & de Science naturelle, il revint en Perse avec ces connoissances qu'il communiqua aux Mages' (Louis Moreri, *Le Grand Dictionnaire historique* [Amsterdam, 1740], viii. 116). The 'celebrated philosopher *Apollonius Tyaneus*' is said to have travelled 'as far as *India*, to visit the philosophers there', throughout Asia Minor, 'all over *Greece*', to Egypt, to '*Ethiopia*, with a design to visit the philosophers of that country', and to many other places (*An Universal History, from the Earliest Account of Time*, xv [1748], 88-104).

² In the *Public Ledger* for Saturday, 9 February 1760.

to send thee daily a map of my mind. I am every day better reconciled to the people among whom I reside, and begin to fancy that in time I shall find them more opulent, more charitable, and more hospitable than I at first imagined. I begin to learn somewhat of
 5 their manners and customs, and to see reasons for several deviations which they make from us, from whom all other nations derive their politeness as well as their original.

In spite of taste, in spite of prejudice, I now begin to think their women tolerable; I can now look on a languishing blue eye without
 10 disgust, and pardon a set of teeth, even though whiter than ivory. I now begin to fancy there is no universal standard for beauty. The truth is, the manners of the ladies in this city are so very open, and so vastly engaging, that I am inclined to pass over the more glaring defects of their persons, since compensated by the more solid, yet
 15 latent beauties of the mind; what tho' they want black teeth, or are deprived of the allurements of feet no bigger than their thumbs, yet still they have souls, my friend, such souls, so free, so pressing, so hospitable, and so engaging: I have received more invitations in the streets of London from the sex in one night, than I have met with
 20 at Pekin in twelve revolutions of the moon.

Every evening as I return home from my usual solitary excursions, I am met by several of those well disposed daughters of hospitality, at different times and in different streets, richly dressed, and with minds not less noble than their appearance. You know that nature
 25 has indulged me with a person by no means agreeable, yet are they too generous to object to my homely appearance; they feel no repugnance at my broad face and flat nose; they perceive me to be a stranger, and that alone is a sufficient recommendation. They even seem to think it their duty to do the honours of the country by

1 mind.] 62; mind; for this invention I honour the manes of that great emperor who first instituted marks to represent our ideas, who humaniz'd mankind, and taught that the most holy was to come from the west! PL I am] PL; *par.* 62

8 now] 62; now therefore PL

9 look on] 62; look upon PL

11 there] 62; that there PL beauty. The] 62; beauty in this city; the PL

12 in this city] 62; *om.* PL

14 since compensated by] 62; in consideration of PL

16 their thumbs] 62; my thumb PL

25 a person by no means agreeable] 62; no very agreeable figure PL

27 repugnance at] 62; repugnance to PL nose] 62; nose: No PL me
 to be] 62; that I am PL

29 the country] 62; their country PL

every act of complaisance in their power. One takes me under the arm, and in a manner forces me along; another catches me round the neck, and desires to partake in this office of hospitality; while a third kinder still, invites me to refresh my spirits with wine. Wine is in England reserved only for the rich, yet here even wine is given away 5 to the stranger.

A few nights ago, one of those generous creatures, dressed all in white, and flaunting like a meteor by my side, forcibly attended me home to my own apartment. She seemed charmed with the elegance of the furniture, and the convenience of my situation. And well 10 indeed she might, for I have hired an apartment for not less than two shillings of their money every week.¹ But her civility did not rest here; for at parting, being desirous to know the hour, and perceiving my watch out of order, she kindly took it to be repaired by a relation of her own, which you may imagine will save some expence, and she 15 assures me that it will cost her nothing. I shall have it back in a few days when mended, and am preparing a proper speech expressive of my gratitude on the occasion: Celestial excellence, I intend to say, happy I am in having found out, after many painful adventures, a land of innocence, and a people of humanity; I may rove into 20 other climes, and converse with nations yet unknown, but where shall I meet a soul of such purity as that which resides in thy breast! sure thou hast been nurtured by the bill of the Shin Shin, or suck'd

1 power. One] 62; power to bestow; one *PL*

4 with wine] 62; with a glass of wine *PL*

8 forcibly] 62; *om. PL*

10 situation. And] 62; situation (and *PL*

12 week. But] 62; week) but *PL*

15 save] 62; save me *PL*

15-16 and she . . . will cost] 62; while it costs *PL*

18 on] 62; upon *PL*

18-19 I intend . . . I am] 62; will I say, I am happy *PL*

19-20 adventures, a] 62; adventures the *PL*

20 a people] 62; the people *PL*

¹ That the elegance of an apartment for two shillings a week was not intended seriously is apparent from Boswell's speculations less than three years later: 'I thought my seeking a lodging was like seeking a wife. Sometimes I aimed at one of two guineas a week, like a rich lady of quality. Sometimes at one guinea, like a knight's daughter; and at last fixed on £22 a year, like the daughter of a good gentleman of moderate fortune' (*Boswell's London Journal*, 1762-1763 [1950], p. 59). Cf. also the remark of the Man in Black in Letter XXXII below: 'Not one of all these that could not lead a more comfortable life at home in their little lodging of three shillings a week, with their lukewarm dinner, served up between two pewter plates from a cook's shop.'

the breasts of the provident Gin Hiung.¹ The melody of thy voice could rob the Chong Fou of her whelps, or inveigle the Boh that lives in the midst of the waters. Thy servant shall ever retain a sense of thy favours; and one day boast of thy virtue, sincerity, and truth
5 among the daughters of China. Adieu.

LETTER IX.²

[The licentiousness of the English, with regard to women. A character of a woman's man.]

10 *From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.*

I HAVE been deceived; she whom I fancied a daughter of Paradise has proved to be one of the infamous disciples of Han; I have lost a trifle, I have gain'd the consolation of having discovered a deceiver. I once more, therefore, relax into my former indifference
15 with regard to the English ladies, they once more begin to appear disagreeable in my eyes; thus is my whole time passed in forming conclusions which the next minute's experience may probably destroy, the present moment becomes a comment on the past, and I improve rather in humility than wisdom.
20 Their laws and religion forbid the English to keep more than one woman, I therefore concluded that prostitutes were banished from society; I was deceived, every man here keeps as many wives as he can maintain, the laws are cemented with blood, praised and disregarded. The very Chinese, whose religion allows him two wives,
25 takes not half the liberties of the English in this particular. Their

2 Boh] 62; Boh Chou PL

3 in the midst of] 62; amidst PL

5 Adieu.] 62; om. PL

12 Han] 62; Lao PL

12-13 I have lost] 62; what I have lost is but PL

13 I have gain'd] 62; what I have gain'd is PL having] 62; having at last PL

18 the present] 62; one PL

18-19 past, and . . . rather in] 62; preceding, and serves to teach me rather PL

23 cemented with blood,] 62; om. PL

25 the English] 62; an Englishman PL Their] 62; The English PL

¹ These two names appear to be derived from Du Halde, i. 14: ' . . . the *Sin-sin* seems to be a kind of Ape; they say it is as large as a middle siz'd Man. . . . What they likewise report of the *Jin-hyung*, or *Man-Bear*, . . . ought only to be understood of the extraordinary bigness of those Bears compar'd with Man. . . .'

² In the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 12 February 1760.

laws may be compared to the books of the Sybils, they are held in great veneration, but seldom read, or seldomer understood; even those who pretend to be their guardians dispute about the meaning of many of them, and confess their ignorance of others. The law therefore which commands them to have but one wife, is strictly 5 observed only by those for whom one is more than sufficient, or by such as have not money to buy two. As for the rest they violate it publicly, and some glory in its violation.¹ They seem to think like the Persians, that they give evident marks of manhood by encreasing their seraglio. A mandarine therefore here generally keeps four 10 wives, a gentleman three, and a stage-player two. As for the magistrates, the country justices and squires, they are employed first in debauching young virgins, and then punishing the transgression.

From such a picture you will be apt to conclude, that he who employs four ladies for his amusement, has four times as much 15 constitution to spare as he who is contented with one; that a Mandarine is much cleverer than a gentleman, and a gentleman than a player, and yet it is quite the reverse; a Mandarine is frequently supported on spindle shanks, appears emaciated by luxury, and is obliged to have recourse to variety, merely from the weakness, not 20 the vigour of his constitution, the number of his wives being the most equivocal symptom of his virility.

Beside the country squire there is also another set of men, whose whole employment consists in corrupting beauty; these the silly 25 part of the fair sex call amiable; the more sensible part of them however give them the title of abominable.² You will probably

12 they] 62; *om. PL* first] 62; *om. PL*

13 virgins, and . . . the transgression.] 62; virgins for the town; and the city justices are employed in sending them to the house of correction. Thus they play into each others hands, and make work for each other. *PL*

21 the number of his wives being] 62; and the number of his wives is *PL*

22 virility] 62; abilities *PL*

23 squire there is] 62; squires there are *PL*

24 beauty] 62; beauty wherever they are admitted *PL*

25 fair] 62; *om. PL* them] 62; them, and all the men *PL*

¹ The paragraph to this point is a fairly close translation of the beginning of lettre xxi in d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises* (i. 183-4). England is substituted for France as the country involved.

² Cf. *ibid.*, p. 185: 'On appelle ici un adultère, un *homme à bonne fortune*; on donne le titre d'*aimable* à une personne qui mérite celui d'*abominable*.'

demand what are the talents of a man thus caressed by the majority of the opposite sex; what talents, or what beauty is he possessed of superior to the rest of his fellows. To answer you directly, he has neither talents nor beauty, but then he is possessed of impudence
 5 and assiduity. With assiduity and impudence men of all ages, and all figures may commence admirers. I have even been told of some who made professions of expiring for love, when all the world could perceive they were going to die of old age: and what is more surprising still, such batter'd beaus are generally most infamously
 10 successful.

A fellow of this kind employs three hours every morning in dressing his head, by which is understood only his hair.

He is a professed admirer, not of any particular lady, but of the whole sex.

15 He is to suppose every lady has caught cold every night, which gives him an opportunity of calling to see how she does the next morning.

He is upon all occasions to shew himself in very great pain for the ladies; if a lady drops even a pin, he is to fly in order to present it.

20 He never speaks to a lady without advancing his mouth to her ear, by which he frequently addresses more senses than one.

Upon proper occasions he looks excessively tender. This is performed by laying his hand upon his heart, shutting his eyes, and shewing his teeth.

25 He is excessively fond of dancing a minuet with the ladies, by which is only meant walking round the floor eight or ten times with his hat on, affecting great gravity, and sometimes looking tenderly on his partner.

He never affronts any man himself, and never resents an affront
 30 from another.

1 thus] 62; who is thus *PL*

4 nor] 62; or *PL*

5 assiduity and impudence] 62; these two qualifications *PL*

6 figures] 62; kinds of person and face *PL* some] 62; men *PL*

9 batter'd beaus] 62; men in the decline of life *PL*

10 successful.] *Following this PL has an additional par., om. 62:* As we sometimes however talk in China of the twelve beatitudes of Confucius, the three excellencies of Quangti, or the five tranquilities of Lao, permit me to recite the ten perfections of a Dangler, the appellation by which creatures of this character are distinguished from men.

11 A fellow of this kind] 62; He *PL* every] 62; each *PL*

19 present it] 62; present it to her *PL*

26 times] 62; turns *PL*

He has an infinite variety of small talk upon all occasions, and laughs when he has nothing more to say.

Such is the killing creature who prostrates himself to the sex till he has undone them; all whose submissions are the effects of design, and who to please the ladies almost becomes himself a lady. 5

LETTER X.¹

[The journey of the Chinese from Pekin to Moscow. The customs of the Daures.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

I HAVE hitherto given you no account of my journey from China 10 to Europe, of my travels through countries, where nature sports in primeval rudeness, where she pours forth her wonders in solitude; countries, from whence the rigorous climate, the sweeping inundation, the drifted desert, the howling forest, and mountains of immeasurable height banish the husbandman, and spread extensive 15 desolation; countries where the brown Tartar wanders for a precarious subsistence, with an heart that never felt pity, himself more hideous than the wilderness he makes.

You² will easily conceive the fatigue of crossing vast tracts of land, either desolate, or still more dangerous by its inhabitants. The 20 retreat of men, who seem driven from society, in order to make war upon all the human race; nominally professing a subjection to Moscovy or China, but without any resemblance to the countries on which they depend.

After I had crossed the great wall, the first object that presented 25 were the remains of desolated cities, and all the magnificence of venerable ruin. There were to be seen temples of beautiful structure, statues wrought by the hand of a master, and around a country of luxuriant plenty; but not one single inhabitant to reap the bounties of nature. These were prospects that might humble the pride of 30

20 dangerous by] 62; dangerous in *PL*

21 retreat] 62; retreats *PL*

22 nominally professing] 62; for tho' they nominally profess *PL*

22-23 to Moscovy] 62; either to Moscovy *PL*

23 but without any resemblance to] 62; they have no resemblance of *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Thursday, 14 February 1760.

² From this point Goldsmith's letter is, with the exception of a few scattered sentences, a somewhat abridged translation of d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises*, lettre xxviii (i. 259-66).

- kings, and repress human vanity. I ask'd my guide the cause of such desolation. These countries, says he, were once the dominions of a Tartar prince; and these ruins the seat of arts, elegance, and ease. This prince waged an unsuccessful war with one of the emperors
 5 of China; he was conquered, his cities plundered, and all his subjects carried into captivity. Such are the effects of the ambition of kings! Ten Dervises, says the Indian proverb, shall sleep in peace upon a single carpet, while two kings shall quarrel though they have kingdoms to divide them. Sure, my friend, the cruelty and the pride
 10 of man have made more desarts than nature ever made! she is kind, but man is ungrateful! Proceeding in my journey thro' this pensive scene of desolated beauty, in a few days I arrived among the Daures, a nation still dependent on China. Xaixigar is their principal city, which, compared with those of Europe, scarcely deserves the name.
 15 The governors and other officers, who are sent yearly from Pekin, abuse their authority, and often take the wives and daughters of the inhabitants to themselves. The Daures accustomed to base submission, feel no resentment at those injuries, or stifle what they feel. Custom and necessity teach even barbarians the same art of
 20 dissimulation that ambition and intrigue inspire in the breasts of the polite. Upon beholding such unlicensed stretches of power, alas, thought I, how little does our wise and good emperor know of these intolerable exactions! these provinces are too distant for complaint, and too insignificant to expect redress.
 25 *The more distant the government, the honester should be the governor to whom it is entrusted; for hope of impunity is a strong inducement to violation.*

The religion of the Daures is more absurd than even that of the sectaries of Fohi.¹ How would you be surprized, O sage disciple and

3 the seat of arts, elegance] 62; once the seat of opulence, arts PL

7-9 Ten Dervises . . . them. Sure] 62; sure PL

11 Proceeding] PL; par. 62

19 art] 62; arts PL

20-21 the polite] 62; courtiers PL

25 The] PL; no par. 62

26 hope of impunity] 62; a certainty of not being punished, PL

¹ D'Argens has 'Sectateurs de Lao-Kium' (i. 262); but cf. i. 82: 'L'histoire de ce Foë n'est guères moins ridicule que celle de Lao-Kium.' Fohi, who appears frequently in later letters, appears to be Goldsmith's adaptation of Foë or Foë. Le Comte gives a brief account of his followers: 'La seconde secte, qui domine à la Chine, . . . adore comme l'unique divinité du monde une idole qu'on nomme Fo ou Foë. Elle y fut transportée des Indes trente-deux ans après la mort de JESUS-CHRIST. Cette contagion, qui

follower of Confucius! you who believe one eternal intelligent cause of all, should you be present at the barbarous ceremonies of this infatuated people. How would you deplore the blindness and folly of mankind. His boasted reason seems only to light him astray, and brutal instinct more regularly points out the path to happiness. 5 Could you think it? they adore a wicked divinity; they fear him and they worship him; they imagine him a malicious being, ready to injure and ready to be appeased. The men and women assemble at midnight in a hut, which serves for a temple. A priest stretches himself on the ground, and all the people pour forth the most horrid cries, while drums and timbrels swell the infernal concert. After this dissonance, miscalled music, has continued about two hours, the priest rises from the ground, assumes an air of inspiration, grows big with the inspiring dæmon, and pretends to a skill in futurity. 10

In every country, my friend, the bonzes, the brachmans, and the priests deceive the people; all reformatations begin from the laity; the priests point us out the way to heaven with their fingers, but stand still themselves, nor seem to travel towards the country in view. 15

The customs of this people correspond to their religion; they keep their dead for three days on the same bed where the person died; 20 after which they bury him in a grave moderately deep, but with the head still uncovered. Here for several days they present him different sorts of meats; which, when they perceive he does not consume, they fill up the grave, and desist from desiring him to eat for the future. How, how can mankind be guilty of such strange absurdity; to entreat a dead body already putrid to partake of the banquet? Where, I again repeat it, is human reason! not only some men, but whole nations, seem divested of its illumination. Here we observe a whole country adoring a divinity through fear, and attempting to feed the dead. These are their most serious and most religious occupations: are these men rational, or are not the apes of 25 Borneo more wise? 30

18 travel towards] 62; journey to *PL*

commença par la Cour, gagna ensuite les Provinces, & se répandit en toutes les villes: de sorte que ce grand corps déjà gasté par la magie & par l'impiété, fut tout-à-fait corrompu par l'idolatrie, & devint un assemblage monstrueux de toutes sortes d'erreurs. Les fables, les superstitions, la métempsicose, l'idolatrie, l'athéisme partagerent les esprits, & s'en rendirent tellement les maîtres, qu'à present mesme, le Christianisme n'a point de plus grand obstacle à son établissement que cette impie & cette ridicule doctrine' (ii. 123-4). For more detailed accounts see Du Halde, i. 650-7, and *Lettres chinoises*, lettre xi (i. 81-91).

Certain I am, O thou instructor of my youth! that without philosophers, without some few virtuous men, who seem to be of a different nature from the rest of mankind, without such as these the worship of a wicked divinity would surely be established over every
 5 part of the earth. Fear guides more to their duty than gratitude: for one man who is virtuous from the love of virtue; from the obligation which he thinks he lies under to the giver of all: there are ten thousand who are good only from their apprehensions of punishment. Could these last be persuaded, as the Epicureans were, that heaven
 10 had no thunders in store for the villain, they would no longer continue to acknowledge subordination, or thank that being who gave them existence. Adieu.

LETTER XI.¹

[The benefits of luxury, in making a people more wise and happy.²]

- 15 *From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.*

FROM such a picture of nature in primeval simplicity, tell me, my much respected friend are you in love with fatigue and solitude. Do you sigh for the severe frugality of the wandering

12 existence] 62; theirs *PL*

18 my] 62; O *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Monday, 18 February 1760.

² Prior, Forster, Gibbs, and others have found an inconsistency between Goldsmith's defence of luxury in this letter and his attacks upon it elsewhere in his writings, most notably in *The Deserted Village*. A satisfactory defence of Goldsmith's consistency has been made by Howard J. Bell, Jr., in his paper 'The Deserted Village and Goldsmith's Social Doctrines', *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, lix (1944), 747-72, particularly pp. 753-9. Probably the best commentary on Goldsmith's treatment of luxury in his works in general and in this letter in particular is, as Bell suggests, David Hume's essay 'Of Luxury' (*Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects* [1758], pp. 157-64). Considering luxury, much as Goldsmith does here, as 'great refinement in the gratification of the senses' (p. 157), Hume attempts to prove, 'first, that the ages of refinement and luxury are both the happiest and most virtuous; secondly, that where-ever luxury ceases to be innocent, it also ceases to be beneficial; and when carried a degree too far, is a quality pernicious, tho' perhaps not the most pernicious, to political society' (p. 158); and in the first part of the essay he develops most of the topics treated by Goldsmith here. Other defences of luxury similar to Goldsmith's with which he was in all probability familiar appear in L. A. de La Beaumelle's *Reflections of ****** [a translation of *Mes Pensées*], no. 53 (1753), pp. 41-42, and in the review of *A Letter from M. Rousseau . . . to M. D'Alembert* in the *Critical Review* for January 1759 (vii. 48-59), in which the reviewer makes extensive unacknowledged borrowings from Hume's essay 'Of Luxury'. For the general background of Goldsmith's defence see André Morize, *L'Apologie du luxe au XVIII^e siècle* (Paris, 1909).

Tartar, or regret being born amidst the luxury and dissimulation of the polite? Rather tell me, has not every kind of life vices peculiarly its own? Is it not a truth, that refined countries have more vices, but those not so terrible, barbarous nations few, and they of the most hideous complexion? Perfidy and fraud are the vices of civilized nations, credulity and violence those of the inhabitants of the desert. Does the luxury of the one produce half the evils of the inhumanity of the other? Certainly those philosophers, who declaim against luxury, have but little understood its benefits; they seem insensible, that to luxury we owe not only the greatest part of our knowledge but even of our virtues.

It may sound fine in the mouth of a declaimer when he talks of subduing our appetites, of teaching every sense to be content with a bare sufficiency, and of supplying only the wants of nature; but is there not more satisfaction in indulging those appetites, if with innocence and safety, than in restraining them? Am not I better pleased in enjoyment than in the sullen satisfaction of thinking that I can live without enjoyment? The more various our artificial necessities, the wider is our circle of pleasure; for all pleasure consists in obviating necessities as they rise; luxury, therefore, as it encreases our wants, encreases our capacity for happiness.

Examine the history of any country remarkable for opulence and wisdom, you will find they would never have been wise had they not been first luxurious; you will find poets, philosophers, and even patriots, marching in luxury's train. The reason is obvious; we then only are curious after knowledge when we find it connected with sensual happiness. The senses ever point out the way, and reflection comments upon the discovery. Inform a native of the desert of Kobe, of the exact measure of the parallax of the moon, he finds no

1 regret] 62; do you regret *PL*

3-7 own? Is . . . desert. Does] 62; own; are perfidy and fraud among civilized nations so shocking as credulity and violence among the barbarous inhabitants of the desert? or does *PL*

7 evils of the inhumanity] 62; evil of the ignorant rusticity *PL*

10 greatest] 62; greater *PL*

11 even of our virtues] 62; of our virtues also *PL*

12 It may sound] 62; I confess it sounds *PL*

15 if with] 62; if we can do it with *PL*

18 enjoyment?] 62; it? *PL* artificial] 62; *om. PL*

19 all] 62; *om. PL*

20 as it] 62; which *PL*

27 sensual] 62; private *PL* The senses ever point] 62; Sense ever points *PL*

29 the parallax of the moon] 62; a degree upon the equator *PL*

satisfaction at all in the information; he wonders how any could take such pains and lay out such treasures in order to solve so useless a difficulty, but connect it with his happiness, by shewing that it improves navigation, that by such an investigation he may have a warmer coat, a better gun, or a finer knife, and he is instantly in raptures at so great an improvement. In short, we only desire to know what we desire to possess; and whatever we may talk against it, luxury adds the spur to curiosity, and gives us a desire of becoming more wise.

- But not our knowledge only, but our virtues are improved by luxury. Observe the brown savage of Thibet, to whom the fruits of the spreading pomegranate supply food, and its branches an habitation. Such a character has few vices I grant, but those he has are of the most hideous nature, rapine and cruelty are scarce crimes in his eye, neither pity nor tenderness, which enoble every virtue, have any place in his heart, he hates his enemies, and kills those he subdues. On the other hand, the polite Chinese and civilized European seem even to love their enemies. I have just now seen an instance where the English have succoured those enemies whom their own countrymen actually refused to relieve.¹

The greater the luxuries of every country, the more closely, politically speaking, is that country united. Luxury is the child of society alone, the luxurious man stands in need of a thousand different artists to furnish out his happiness; it is more likely, therefore, that he should be a good citizen who is connected by motives of self-interest with so many, than the abstemious man who is united to none.

In whatsoever light therefore we consider luxury, whether as

7 possess] 62; possess, reason generally follows sensation and registers her discoveries *PL*

8 it, luxury adds the spur] 62; luxury, it is she that adds spurs *PL*

16-17 subdues. On] 62; subdues; on *PL*

18 I] 62; Would you believe it, when I tell you I *PL*

28 therefore] 62; *om. PL*

¹ A subscription for clothing French prisoners held captive in England had been started in London by November 1759. For evidence of continued interest in the benevolence of the English as compared with the French see the *Grand Magazine of Universal Intelligence* for January 1760 (iii. 35): '... we triumph over our enemies no less by our virtues, than by our arms; for we have even extended our charity to them, whom their own master and fellow-subjects have deserted'; and cf. the beginning of a letter signed Probus in the *Public Ledger* for 1 February 1760. The subscription is discussed in Letter XXIII below.

employing a number of hands naturally too feeble for more laborious employment, as finding a variety of occupation for others who might be totally idle, or as furnishing out new inlets to happiness, without encroaching on mutual property, in whatever light we regard it, we shall have reason to stand up in its defence, and the sentiment of 5 Confucius still remains unshaken; *that we should enjoy as many of the luxuries of life as are consistent with our own safety, and the prosperity of others, and that he who finds out a new pleasure is one of the most useful members of society.*

LETTER XII.¹

10

[The funeral solemnities of the English. Their passion for flattering epitaphs.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

FROM the funeral solemnities of the Daures, who think them- 15 selves the politest people in the world, I must make a transition to the funeral solemnities of the English, who think themselves as polite as they. The numberless ceremonies which are used here when a person is sick, appear to me so many evident marks of fear and apprehension. Ask an Englishman, however, whether he is afraid of death, and he boldly answers in the negative: but observe his 20 behaviour in circumstances of approaching sickness, and you will find his actions give his assertions the lie. The² Chinese are very sincere in this respect; they hate to die, and they confess their terrors: a great part of their life is spent in preparing things proper for their funeral; a poor artizan shall spend half his income in pro- 25 viding himself a tomb twenty years before he wants it; and denies himself the necessaries of life, that he may be amply provided for when he shall want them no more.

5 sentiment] 62; sentiments PL

20 answers in the negative] 62; says, no PL observe] 62; see PL

22 The] PL; par. 62

28 shall want them no more.] 62; is dead. The English take almost equal pains, and probably from the same motive, but at the same time endeavour to conceal their solicitude. PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Thursday, 21 February 1760.

² From this point through the first sentence of paragraph 5 Goldsmith makes a slightly rearranged translation of parts of lettres v and vi of d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises* (i. 34-35, 40-43), where, however, the allusion is to France.

But people of distinction in England really deserve pity, for they die in circumstances of the most extreme distress. It is an established rule, never to let a man know that he is dying; physicians are sent for, the clergy are called, and every thing passes in silent solemnity
 5 round the sick bed; the patient is in agonies, looks round for pity, yet not a single creature will say that he is dying. If he is possessed of fortune, his relations entreat him to make his will, as it may restore the tranquillity of his mind. He is desired to undergo the rites of the church, for decency requires it. His friends take their
 10 leave only because they don't care to see him in pain. In short, an hundred stratagems are used to make him do what he might have been induced to perform only by being told; *Sir, you are past all hopes, and had as good think decently of dying.*

Besides all this, the chamber is darkened, the whole house echoes
 15 to the cries of the wife, the lamentations of the children, the grief of the servants, and the sighs of friends. The bed is surrounded with priests and doctors in black, and only flambeaux emit a yellow gloom. Where is the man, how intrepid soever, that would not shrink at such a hideous solemnity? For fear of affrighting their
 20 expiring friends, the English practise all that can fill them with terror. Strange effect of human prejudice thus to torture merely from mistaken tenderness!

You see, my friend, what contradictions there are in the tempers of those islanders; when prompted by ambition, revenge, or dis-
 25 appointment, they meet death with the utmost resolution; the very man who in his bed would have trembled at the aspect of a doctor, shall go with intrepidity to attack a bastion, or deliberately nooze himself up in his garters.

The passion of the Europeans for magnificent interments, is
 30 equally strong with that of the Chinese. When a tradesman dies, his frightful face is painted up by an undertaker, and he is placed in a proper situation to receive company; this is called lying in state. To

1 But people] 62; People PL in England] 62; here PL

4 silent] 62; mute PL

7 may] 62; will PL

17 only] 62; om. PL

18 gloom] 62; gloom instead of the light of the day PL

19 hideous] 62; gloomy PL

23 contradictions there are] 62; a strange contradiction there is PL

28 his garters] 62; a halter PL

31 he is] PL; om. 62

32 this is] 62; and this is PL

this disagreeable spectacle all the idlers in town flock, and learn to loath the wretch dead, whom they despised when living. In this manner you see some who would have refused a shilling to save the life of their dearest friend, bestow thousands on adorning their putrid corpse. I have been told of a fellow who grown rich by the price of blood, left it in his will that he should lie in state, and thus unknowingly gibbeted himself into infamy, when he might have otherwise quietly retired into oblivion.¹

When the person is buried, the next care is to make his epitaph; they are generally reckoned best which flatter most; such relations therefore as have received most benefits from the defunct, discharge this friendly office; and generally flatter in proportion to their joy. When we read those monumental histories of the dead, it may be justly said, that *all men are equal in the dust*; for they all appear equally remarkable for being the most sincere Christians, the most benevolent neighbours, and the honestest men of their time. To go thro' an European cemetery, one would be apt to wonder how mankind could have so basely degenerated from such excellent ancestors; every tomb pretends to claim your reverence and regret; some are praised for piety in those inscriptions who never entered the temple until they were dead; some are praised for being excellent poets, who were never mentioned, except for their dulness, when living; others for sublime orators, who were never noted except for their impudence; and others still for military achievements, who were never in any other skirmishes but with the watch.² Some even make

5 corpse] 62; carcass *PL*

6 left] 62; ordered a magnificent funeral, left *PL*

7 unknowingly] 62; involuntarily *PL* when he] 62; who *PL*

10 best] 62; the best *PL*

11 as] 62; who *PL*

12 generally flatter . . . their joy] 62; express their joy in the warmest strains of monumental gratitude *PL*

14-16 for they . . . time. To] 62; all men who have any character on their tombs, have a good one; to *PL*

22 mentioned, except . . . when living] 62; mentioned when living, except for their dulness *PL*

23 noted except for] 62; known except by *PL*

25 with the watch] 62; those of drink *PL*

¹ Prior compares Pope's Epistle to Bathurst (*Moral Essays*, iii), ll. 291-2:

When Hopkins dies, a thousand lights attend
The wretch, who living saved a candle's end.

² The latter part of this sentence appears to have been influenced by a passage in an

epitaphs for themselves, and bespeak the readers good will. It were indeed to be wish'd, that every man would early learn in this manner to make his own; that he would draw it up in terms as flattering as possible; and that he would make it the employment of his whole life to deserve it.¹

I have not yet been in a place called Westminster Abbey, but soon intend to visit it. There I am told I shall see justice done to deceased merit; none I am told are permitted to be buried there, but such as have adorned as well as improved mankind. There no intruders by the influence of friends or fortune, presume to mix their unhallowed ashes with philosophers, heroes, and poets. Nothing but true merit has a place in that awful sanctuary: the guardianship of the tombs is committed to several reverend priests, who are never guilty for a superior reward of taking down the names of good men, to make room for others of equivocal character, nor ever prophane the sacred walls with pageants, that posterity cannot know, or shall blush to own. I always was of opinion, that sepulchral honours of this kind should be considered as a national concern, and not trusted to the care of the priests of any country, how respectable soever; but from the conduct of the reverend personages, whose disinterested patriotism I shall shortly be able to discover, I am taught to retract my former sentiments. It is true, the Spartans and the Persians made a fine political use of sepulchral vanity; they permitted none to be thus interred, who had not fallen in the vindication of their country;² a monument thus became a real mark of distinction, it nerved the

11 Nothing] 62; I am told nothing *PL*

15 character, nor ever] 62; character; who never *PL*

17 I] *PL*; *par.* 62 always] 62; ever *PL*

21 shall shortly be able to discover] 62; have been now describing *PL*

23 sepulchral] 62; this sepulchral *PL*

essay 'To the R——t R——d the D——n and C——r of W****r, the humble Petition of POSTERITY', in the *Literary Magazine*, iii (April 1758), 176: '... the pavements and walls of your abbey [are] already possess'd by names of Generals never known, but by their preferments; Poets never mention'd, but for their dulness; Patriots never heard of, but by their posts; and Orators never known to pronounce a significant word, but the monosyllables, aye and no.'

¹ The last two sentences are from the *Encyclopédie*, v (1755), 817-18, art. 'Épitaphe': 'Quelques auteurs ont fait eux-mêmes leur épitaphe. . . Il seroit à souhaiter que chacun fit la sienne de bonne heure; qu'il la fit la plus flatteuse qu'il est possible, & qu'il employât toute sa vie à la mériter.'

² Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 816-17: 'A Sparte on n'accordoit des épitaphes qu'à ceux qui étoient morts dans un combat, & pour le service de la patrie. . .'

heroes arm with tenfold vigour; and he fought without fear, who only fought for a grave! Farewell.

LETTER XIII.¹

[An account of Westminster Abbey.]

*From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Cere-
monial Academy at Pekin, in China.*

I AM just returned from Westminster-abbey, the place of sepul-
ture for the philosophers, heroes, and kings of England. What a
gloom do monumental inscriptions and all the venerable remains of
deceased merit inspire! Imagine a temple marked with the hand of
antiquity, solemn as religious awe, adorned with all the magnificence
of barbarous profusion, dim windows, fretted pillars, long colonades,
and dark cielings. Think then, what were my sensations at being
introduced to such a scene. I stood in the midst of the temple, and
threw my eyes round on the walls filled with the statues, the inscrip-
tions, and the monuments of the dead.

Alas, I said to myself, how does pride attend the puny child of
dust even to the grave! Even humble as I am, I possess more con-
sequence in the present scene than the greatest heroe of them all;
they have toiled for an hour to gain a transient immortality, and are
at length retired to the grave, where they have no attendant but the
worm, none to flatter but the epitaph.

As I was indulging such reflections, a gentleman dressed in black,²
perceiving me to be a stranger came up, entered into conversation,
and politely offered to be my instructor and guide through the

¹ and he fought] 62; for he surely must fight *PL*

² only fought] 62; only fights *PL* Farewell] 62; Adieu *PL*

¹⁰ Imagine] 62; Imagine you behold *PL*

¹¹⁻¹² adorned with . . . barbarous profusion,] 62; *om. PL*

¹³ then] 62; then, O my friend *PL*

¹⁵ filled] 62; which were filled *PL*

¹⁸ humble as I am, I] 62; I, humble as I am, *PL*

¹⁹ heroe] 62; dead heroe *PL*

²² epitaph.] 62; epitaph. Yet it is the duty of every good government to turn this
silly pride to its own advantage, to grow strong in the aggregate from the weakness of
every individual. *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Monday, 25 February 1760.

² D'Argens, in *Lettres chinoises*, lettre lviii (ii. 289-96), describes a conversation in
a Paris bookshop between a Chinese and 'un homme habillé de noir'.

temple. If any monument, said he, should particularly excite your curiosity, I shall endeavour to satisfy your demands. I accepted with thanks the gentleman's offer, adding, that "I was come to observe the policy, the wisdom, and the justice of the English, in conferring
 5 rewards upon deceased merit. If adulation like this, continued I, be properly conducted, as it can no way injure those who are flattered, so it may be a glorious incentive to those who are now capable of enjoying it. It is the duty of every good government to turn this monumental pride to its own advantage, to become strong in the
 10 aggregate from the weakness of the individual. If none but the truly great have a place in this awful repository, a temple like this will give the finest lessons of morality, and be a strong incentive to true ambition. I am told, that none have a place here but characters of the most distinguished merit." The man in black seemed impatient
 15 at my observations, so I discontinued my remarks, and we walked on together to take a view of every particular monument in order as it lay.

As the eye is naturally caught by the finest objects, I could not avoid being particularly curious about one monument, which ap-
 20 peared more beautiful than the rest; that, said I to my guide, I take to be the tomb of some very great man. By the peculiar excellence of the workmanship, and the magnificence of the design, this must be a trophy raised to the memory of some king who has saved his country from ruin, or law-giver, who has reduced his fellow-citizens
 25 from anarchy into just subjection. It is not requisite, replied my companion smiling, to have such qualifications in order to have a very fine monument here. More humble abilities will suffice. *What, I suppose then the gaining two or three battles, or the taking half a score towns, is thought a sufficient qualification?* Gaining battles, or taking
 30 towns replied the man in black, may be of service; but a gentleman may have a very fine monument here without ever seeing a battle

2 demands] 62; questions as far as I am able *PL*

6 way] *PL*; ways 62

7-8 are now . . . enjoying it] 62; desire to be flattered *PL*

8-10 It is . . . the individual.] 62; in *PL* this sentence occurs in slightly different form at the end of the preceding paragraph (see textual note above).

18 objects] 62; monuments *PL*

19 monument] 62; *om. PL* 19-20 appeared] 62; to me appeared *PL*

20 the rest] 62; ordinary *PL*

21 man] 62; man indeed *PL*

24 has reduced] 62; reduced *PL*

30 may be of service] 62; are very pretty things *PL*

or a siege. *This then is the monument of some poet, I presume, of one whose wit has gained him immortality?* No, sir, replied my guide, the gentleman who lies here never made verses; and as for wit, he despised it in others, because he had none himself. *Pray tell me then in a word, said I peevishly, what is the great man who lies here particularly remarkable for?* Remarkable, sir! said my companion; why, sir, the gentleman that lies here is remarkable, very remarkable—for a tomb in Westminster-abbey. *But, head of my Ancestors! how has he got here; I fancy he could never bribe the guardians of the temple to give him a place? Should he not be ashamed to be seen among company, where even moderate merit would look like infamy?* I suppose, replied the man in black, the gentleman was rich, and his friends, as is usual in such a case, told him he was great. He readily believed them; the guardians of the temple, as they got by the self delusion, were ready to believe him too;¹ so he paid his money for a fine monument; and the workman, as you see, has made him one the most beautiful.

Think not, however, that this gentleman is singular in his desire of being buried among the great, there are several others in the temple, who, hated and shunned by the great while alive, have come here, fully resolved to keep them company now they are dead. As we walked along to a particular part of the temple, there, says the gentleman, pointing with his finger, that is the poets corner; there you see the monuments of Shakespear, and Milton, and Prior, and Drayton. Drayton, I replied, I never heard of him before, but I have been told of one Pope, is he there? It is time enough, replied my guide, these hundred years, he is not long dead, people have not done hating him yet. Strange, cried I, can any be found to hate a man, whose life was wholly spent in entertaining and instructing his

7 remarkable—] 62; remarkable PL

8 *But, head of my Ancestors! how*] 62; *But how the plague* PL

10 *Should he not be*] 62; *Was he not* PL

12–13 and his . . . a case,] 62; his friends consequently PL

13 great. He] 62; great, and he PL

15 too] 62; om. PL

16 the most beautiful] 62; om. PL

17 Think] PL; no par. 62

20 here] 62; here, however PL As] PL; par. 62

¹ A less generous view is expressed by J. B. Rouquet in *The Present State of the Arts in England* (1755), pp. 64–65: 'To be buried in that church [Westminster Abbey] is a matter of mere private interest, and not any national concern; the custom is to apply to the chapter, who for the sum of twenty guineas, grant leave to break ground, and for forty guineas more vouchsafe to let you have a proper place to erect a monument.'

fellow creatures! Yes, says my guide, they hate him for that very reason. There are a set of men called answerers of books, who take upon them to watch the republic of letters, and distribute reputation by the sheet; they somewhat resemble the eunuchs in a seraglio, who
 5 are incapable of giving pleasure themselves, and hinder those that would. These answerers have no other employment but to cry out Dunce, and Scribbler, to praise the dead, and revile the living, to grant a man of confessed abilities some small share of merit, to applaud twenty blockheads in order to gain the reputation of
 10 candour, and to revile the moral character of the man whose writings they cannot injure. Such wretches are kept in pay by some mercenary bookseller, or more frequently, the bookseller himself takes this dirty work off their hands, as all that is required is to be very abusive and very dull; every Poet of any genius is sure to find such enemies,
 15 he feels, though he seems to despise their malice, they make him miserable here, and in the pursuit of empty fame, at last he gains solid anxiety. *Has this been the case with every poet I see here?* cried I—Yes, with every mother's son of them, replied he, except he happen'd to be born a mandarine. If he has much money, he may
 20 buy reputation from your book answerers, as well as a monument from the guardians of the temple. *But are there not some men of distinguished taste, as in China, who are willing to patronize men of merit and soften the rancour of malevolent dulness.* I own there are many, replied the man in black, but, alas! Sir, the book answerers croud
 25 about them, and call themselves the writers of books; and the patron is too indolent to distinguish; thus poets are kept at a distance, while their enemies eat up all their rewards at the mandarine's table.

Leaving this part of the temple, we made up to an iron gate, thro' which my companion told me we were to pass in order to see the
 30 monuments of the kings. Accordingly I marched up without further ceremony, and was going to enter, when a person who held the gate in his hand, told me I must pay first. I was surprised at such a

6 would. These] 62; would, these PL

11 injure. Such] 62; injure, such PL

17 *Has this been*] 62; *Is such* PL; 62 *here begins a new par.*

17-18 cried I—] 62; om. PL

18 replied he,] 62; om. PL

21 *But*] PL; par. 62

22 *merit*] 62; *real merit* PL

23 I] PL; par. 62

25 books; and the] 62; books the PL

26 is too indolent] 62; has not abilities PL

demand; and asked the man whether the people of England kept
 a *shew*? Whether the paltry sum he demanded was not a national
 reproach? Whether it was not more to the honour of the country to
 let their magnificence or their antiquities be openly seen, than thus
 meanly to tax a curiosity which tended to their own honour? As for
 your questions, replied the gate-keeper, to be sure they may be very
 right, because I don't understand them, but as for that there three-
 pence, I farm it from one, who rents it from another, who hires it
 from a third, who leases it from the guardians of the temple, and
 we all must live. I expected upon paying here to see something extra-
 ordinary, since what I had seen for nothing filled me with so much
 surprize, but in this I was disappointed; there was little more within
 than black coffins, rusty armour, tatter'd standards, and some few
 slovenly figures in wax. I was sorry I had paid, but I comforted
 myself by considering it would be my last payment. A person
 attended us, who, without once blushing, told an hundred lies, he
 talked of a lady who died by pricking her finger,¹ of a king with a
 golden head,² and twenty such pieces of absurdity; look ye there,
 gentlemen, says he, pointing to an old oak chair, there's a curiosity
 for ye; in that chair the kings of England were crowned, you see also
 a stone underneath, and that stone is Jacob's pillow.³ I could see
 no curiosity either in the oak chair or the stone; could I, indeed,
 behold one of the old kings of England seated in this, or Jacob's head
 laid upon the other, there might be something curious in the sight;

5 tended] 62; tends *PL*

9-10 temple, and we all must live] 62; temple *PL*

12 more] 62; more to be seen *PL*

21 that stone] 62; that *PL*

23 this] 62; the one *PL*

¹ Cf. Addison's account of a visit to Westminster Abbey in the *Spectator*, No. 329 (18 March 1712): 'Sir Roger . . . was conducted to the Figure which represents that Martyr to good Housewifery, who died by the Prick of a Needle. Upon our Interpreter's telling us, that she was a Maid of Honour to Queen *Elizabeth*, the Knight was very inquisitive into her Name and Family. . . .'

² Ibid.: 'Our Conductor then pointed to that Monument, where there is the Figure of one of our *English* Kings without an Head; and upon giving us to know, that the Head, which was of beaten Silver, had been stolen away several Years since: Some Whig, I'll warrant you, says Sir Roger. . . .'

³ Ibid.: 'We were then convey'd to the two Coronation Chairs, where my old Friend, after having heard that the Stone underneath the most ancient of them, which was brought from *Scotland*, was called *Jacob's Pillow*, sat himself down in the Chair, and . . . asked our Interpreter, What Authority they had to say, that *Jacob* had ever been in *Scotland*?'

but in the present case, there was no more reason for my surprise than if I should pick a stone from their streets, and call it a curiosity, merely because one of their kings happened to tread upon it as he passed in a procession.

- 5 From hence our conductor led us through several dark walks and winding ways, uttering lies, talking to himself, and flourishing a wand which he held in his hand. He reminded me of the black magicians of Kobi. After we had been almost fatigued with a variety of objects, he, at last desired me to consider attentively a certain suit
 10 of armour, which seemed to shew nothing remarkable. This armour, said he, belonged to general Monk. *Very surprising, that a general should wear armour.* And pray, added he, observe this cap, this is general Monk's cap. *Very strange, indeed, very strange, that a general should have a cap also! Pray friend what might this cap have cost*
 15 *originally?* That, Sir, says he, I don't know, but this cap is all the wages I have for my trouble. *A very small recompence, truly, said I.* Not so very small, replied he, for every gentleman puts some money into it, and I spend the money. *What more money! still more money!* Every gentleman gives something, sir. I'll give thee nothing, returned I; the guardians
 20 of the temple should pay you your wages, friend, and not permit you to squeeze thus from every spectator. When we pay our money at the door to see a shew, we never give more as we are going out. Sure the guardians of the temple can never think they get enough. Shew me the gate; if I stay longer, I may probably meet with more of those
 25 ecclesiastical beggars. Thus leaving the temple precipitately, I returned to my lodgings, in order to ruminate over what was great, and to despise what was mean in the occurrences of the day.

1 in the present case] 62; as it was PL

3 merely] 62; om. PL

4 in a procession] 62; that way PL

8 a variety] 62; the variety PL

14 also! Pray] 62; also, pray PL

19 nothing, returned I] 62; nothing PL

24-25 of those ecclesiastical] 62; om. PL

25 Thus] PL; par. 62

27 the occurrences of the day] 62; all that I had seen PL

LETTER XIV.¹

[The reception of the Chinese from a lady of distinction.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

I WAS some days ago agreeably surprised by a message from a lady of distinction, who sent me word, that she most passionately desired the pleasure of my acquaintance; and, with the utmost impatience, expected an interview. I will not deny my dear Fum Hoam, but that my vanity was raised at such an invitation, I flattered myself that she had seen me in some public place, and had conceived an affection for my person, which thus induced her to deviate from the usual decorums of the sex. My imagination painted her in all the bloom of youth and beauty. I fancied her attended by the loves and graces, and I set out with the most pleasing expectations of seeing the conquest I had made.

When I was introduced into her apartment, my expectations were quickly at an end; I perceived a little shrivelled figure indolently reclined on a sofa, who nodded by way of approbation at my approach.² This, as I was afterwards informed, was the lady herself, a woman equally distinguished for rank, politeness, taste, and understanding. As I was dressed after the fashion of Europe, she had taken me for an Englishman, and consequently saluted me in her ordinary manner; but when the footman informed her grace that I was the gentleman from China, she instantly lifted herself from the couch, while her eyes sparkled with unusual vivacity. "Bless me! can this be the gentleman that was born so far from home? What an unusual share of *somethingness* in his whole appearance. Lord how
27 *somethingness*]" 62; *somethingness* he has *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Thursday, 28 February 1760.

² The letter to this point shows evident borrowing from Lord Lyttelton's *Letters from a Persian in England to his Friend at Ispahan*, letter lxviii (5th ed., 1744), pp. 277-8: "The other Morning, a Friend of mine came to me, and told me . . . that there was a Lady who most passionately desired the Pleasure of my Acquaintance. . . . I will not deny to thee, that my Vanity was a little flattered with this Message: I fancied she had seen me in some public Place, and taken a Liking to my Person; not being able to comprehend what other Motive could make her send for a Man she was a Stranger to in so free and extraordinary a Manner. I painted her in my own Imagination very young, and very handsome, and set out with most pleasing Expectations, to see the Conquest I had made: But when I arrived at the Place of Assignment, I found a little old Woman very dirty, encircled by four or five strange Fellows. . . ." This parallel was pointed out by Martha P. Conant in *The Oriental Tale in England in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1908), pp. 183-5.

- I am charmed with the outlandish cut of his face; how bewitching the exotic breadth of his forehead. I would give the world to see him in his own country dress. Pray turn about, Sir, and let me see you behind. There! there's a travelled air for you. You that attend there,
- 5 bring up a plate of beef cut into small pieces; I have a violent passion to see him eat. Pray, Sir, have you got your chop-sticks about you? it will be so pretty to see the meat carried to the mouth with a jerk. Pray speak a little Chinese: I have learned some of the language myself. Lord, have you nothing pretty from China about you; some-
- 10 thing that one does not know what to do with: I have got twenty things from China that are of no use in the world. Look at those jars, they are of the right pea-green: these are the furniture!" *Dear madam, said I, those, though they may appear fine in your eyes, are but paltry to a Chinese; but, as they are useful utensils, it is proper they*
- 15 *should have a place in every apartment.*¹ Useful! sir, replied the lady; sure you mistake, they are of no use in the world. *What! are they not filled with an infusion of tea as in China?* replied I. Quite empty and useless upon my honour, Sir. *Then they are the most cumbrous and clumsy furniture in the world, as nothing is truly elegant but what*
- 20 *unites use with beauty.* I protest, says the lady, I shall begin to suspect thee of being an actual barbarian. I suppose also you hold my two beautiful pagods in contempt. *What! cried I, has Fohi spread his gross superstitions here also? Pagods of all kinds are my aversion.* A Chinese, a traveller, and want taste! it surprises me. Pray, sir,
- 25 examine the beauties of that Chinese temple which you see at the end of the garden. Is there any thing in China more beautiful? *Where I stand I see nothing, madam, at the end of the garden that may not as well be called an Egyptian pyramid as a Chinese temple; for that little building in view is as like the one as t'other.* What! Sir, is not that
- 30 a Chinese temple? you must surely be mistaken. Mr. Freeze, who designed it, calls it one, and nobody disputes his pretensions to taste. I now found it vain to contradict the lady in any thing she

9 myself.] 62; already myself; *Chin Chan Chong*. How charming it sounds. *PL*

10 one.] 62; a body *PL*

21 of being an actual.] 62; for an idolatrous *PL*

24 Pray, sir,] 62; Pray *PL*

¹ Sells compares Le Comte, i. 256: 'Pour ce qui est de la porcelaine, c'est un meuble si ordinaire qu'elle fait l'ornement de toutes les maisons. Les tables, les buffets, les cabinets, les cuisines mesme en sont pleines; car on boit & on mange dedans, c'est leur vaisselle commune. L'on en fait aussi de grands pots de fleurs.'

thought fit to advance: so was resolved rather to act the disciple than the instructor. She took me through several rooms all furnished, as she told me, in the Chinese manner; sprawling draggons, squatting pagods, and clumsy mandarines, were stuck upon every shelf:¹ in turning round one must have used caution not to demolish a part 5 of the precarious furniture. In a house like this, thought I, one must live continually upon the watch; the inhabitant must resemble a knight in an enchanted castle, who expects to meet an adventure at every turning. *But, madam, said I, do no accidents ever happen to all this finery?* Man, Sir, replied the lady, is born to misfortunes, and 10 it is but fit I should have a share. Three weeks ago, a careless servant snap'd off the head of a favourite mandarine: I had scarce done grieving for that, when a monkey broke a beautiful jar; this I took the more to heart, as the injury was done me by a friend: however, I survived the calamity; when yesterday crash went half a dozen 15 dragons upon the marble hearth stone; and yet I live; I survive it all: you can't conceive what comfort I find under afflictions from philosophy. There is Seneca, and Bolingbroke, and some others, who guide me through life, and teach me to support its calamities. I could not but smile at a woman who makes her own misfortunes, and then 20 deplores the miseries of her situation. Wherefore, tired of acting with dissimulation, and willing to indulge my meditations in solitude, I took leave just as the servant was bringing in a plate of beef, pursuant to the directions of his mistress. Adieu.

4-5 in turning] 62; so that in turning *PL*

6 In] *PL*; *par.* 62

8-9 adventure at every turning] 62; enemy in every corner *PL*

11 a share] 62; my share *PL*

23 leave] 62; my leave *PL*

24 the directions of his mistress] 62; his mistresses directions, who was curious to see the manner of eating in China *PL*

¹ Concerning the English vogue for all things Chinese see the opening paragraph of Goldsmith's review of Murphy's *The Orphan of China* in the *Critical Review* for May 1759 and the note on that passage (above, I, p. 170).

LETTER XV.¹

[Against cruelty to animals. A story from the Zendevest of Zoroaster.]

*From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Cere-
monial Academy at Pekin, in China.*

5 **T**HE better sort here pretend to the utmost compassion for
animals of every kind; to hear them speak, a stranger would be
apt to imagine they could hardly hurt the gnat that stung 'em; they
seem so tender, and so full of pity, that one would take them for the
harmless friends of the whole creation; the protectors of the meanest
10 insect or reptile that was privileged with existence. And yet would
you believe it, I have seen the very men who have thus boasted of
their tenderness; at the same time devouring the flesh of six different
animals tossed up in a fricassee. Strange contrariety of conduct; they
pity and they eat the objects of their compassion. The lion roars with
15 terror over its captive; the tyger sends forth its hideous shriek to
intimidate its prey; no creature shews any fondness for its short
lived prisoner, except a man and a cat.

Man was born to live with innocence and simplicity, but he has
deviated from nature; he was born to share the bounties of heaven,
20 but he has monopolized them; he was born to govern the brute
creation, but he is become their tyrant.² If an epicure now should
happen to surfeit on his last night's feast, twenty animals the next
day are to undergo the most exquisite tortures in order to provoke
his appetite to another guilty meal. Hail, O ye simple, honest
25 bramins of the east, ye inoffensive friends of all that were born to
happiness as well as you: you never sought a short-lived pleasure

11 who] 62; that PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Wednesday, 5 March 1760.

² Cf. Pope's description of the state of nature in *An Essay on Man*, iii. 151-4, 161-4:

Pride then was not; nor Arts, that Pride to aid;
Man walk'd with beast, joint tenant of the shade;
The same his table, and the same his bed;
No murder cloath'd him, and no murder fed.

Ah! how unlike the man of times to come!
Of half that live the butcher and the tomb;
Who, foe to Nature, hears the gen'ral groan,
Murders their species, and betrays his own.

Pope also uses the word 'Tyrant' for man in his relation to the animals (iii. 50).

from the miseries of other creatures. You never studied the tormenting arts of ingenious refinement; you never surfeited upon a guilty meal. How much more purified and refined are all your sensations than ours: you distinguish every element with the utmost precision; a stream untasted before is new luxury, a change of air is a new banquet, too refined for western imaginations to conceive. 5

Though the Europeans do not hold the transmigration of souls, yet one of their doctors has, with great force of argument, and great plausibility of reasoning, endeavoured to prove that the bodies of animals are the habitations of dæmons and wicked spirits, which are obliged to reside in these prisons till the resurrection pronounces their everlasting punishment; but are previously condemned to suffer all the pains and hardships inflicted upon them by man, or by each other here.¹ If this be the case, it may frequently happen, that while we whip pigs to death, or boil live lobsters, we are putting some old acquaintance, some near relation, to excruciating tortures, and are serving him up to the very same table where he was once the most welcome companion. 15

"Kabul, says the Zendavesta, was born on the rushy banks of the river Mawra; his possessions were great, and his luxuries kept pace with the affluence of his fortune; he hated the harmless bramins, and despised their holy religion; every day his table was deck'd out with the flesh of an hundred different animals, and his cooks had an hundred different ways of dressing it, to solicit even satiety. Notwithstanding all his eating, he did not arrive at old age, he died of a surfeit, caused by intemperance: upon this, his soul was carried off, in order to take its trial before a select assembly of the souls of those animals which his gluttony had caused to be slain, and, who were 25

1-3 You never . . . guilty meal.] 62; *om. PL*

5-6 a new] 62; to you a *PL*

15 whip pigs to death] 62; smother sucking pigs *PL*

17 was once] 62; once set as *PL*

19 "Kabul, says the Zendavesta,] 62; The Indians have several stories to enforce the doctrine of transmigration, permit me to relate one as told me by a travelling bramin, whose conversation I had the pleasure of enjoying in my passage thro' the desarts of Bokara. "Kabul *PL*

20 river] 62; *om. PL* and his] 62; his *PL*

24 dressing it] 62; dressing them *PL*

24-25 Notwithstanding] *PL*; *par. 62*

¹ The allusion is probably to the unnamed Jesuit whose theories concerning the souls of animals d'Argens summarizes in *Lettres chinoises*, lettre liv (ii. 246-9).

now appointed his judges. He trembled before a tribunal, to every member of which, he had formerly acted as an unmerciful tyrant; he sought for pity, but found none disposed to grant it. Does he not remember, cries the angry boar, to what agonies I was put, not to
 5 satisfy his hunger, but his vanity. I was first hunted to death, and my flesh scarce thought worthy of coming once to his table. Were my advice followed, he should do penance in the shape of an hog, which in life he most resembled. I am rather, cries a sheep upon the bench, for having him suffer under the appearance of a lamb, we
 10 may then send him through four or five transmigrations in the space of a month. Were my voice of any weight in the assembly, cries a calf, he should rather assume such a form as mine: I was bled every day, in order to make my flesh white, and, at last killed without mercy. Would it not be wiser, cries a hen, to cram him in the shape
 15 of a fowl, and then smother him in his own blood as I was served? The majority of the assembly were pleased with this punishment, and were going to condemn him without further delay, when the ox rose up to give his opinion: I am informed, says this counsellor, that the prisoner at the bar has left a wife with child behind him.
 20 By my knowledge in divination I foresee that this child will be a son decrepid, feeble, sickly, a plague to himself and all about him. What say you then, my companions, if we condemn the father to animate the body of his own son; and by this means make him feel in himself those miseries his intemperance must otherwise have
 25 entailed upon his posterity. The whole court applauded the ingenuity of his torture, they thanked him for his advice. Kabul was driven once more to revisit the earth; and his soul in the body of his own son, passed a period of thirty years loaded with misery, anxiety and disease."

1 He] *PL*; *par.* 62

8 I am] *PL*; *par.* 62

13 white] 62; whiter *PL*

23-24 make him feel in] 62; he will feel *PL*

24 his intemperance] 62; he *PL*

25 posterity.] 62; offspring, *PL*

27-28 his soul . . . own son,] 62; *om.* *PL*

28 loaded] 62; in a body loaded *PL*

LETTER XVI.¹

[Of falshood propagated by books seemingly sincere.]

*From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Cere-
monial Academy at Pekin, in China.*

I Know not whether I am more obliged to the Chinese mission- 5
aries for the instruction I have received from them, or pre-
judiced by the falshoods they have made me believe. By them I was
told that the Pope was universally allowed to be a man, and placed
at the head of the church; in England, however, they plainly prove
him to be an whore in man's cloaths, and often burn him in effigy 10
as an impostor. A thousand books have been written on either side
of the question; priests are eternally disputing against each other;
and those mouths that want argument are filled with abuse. Which
party must I believe, or shall I give credit to neither? When I survey
the absurdities and falsehoods with which the books of the Euro- 15
peans are filled, I thank heaven for having been born in China, and
that I have sagacity enough to detect imposture.

The² Europeans reproach us with false history and fabulous
chronology; how should they blush to see their own books, many of 20
which are written by the doctors of their religion filled with the
most monstrous fables, and attested with the utmost solemnity. The
bounds of a letter, do not permit me to mention all the absurdities
of this kind, which in my reading I have met with. I shall confine
myself to the accounts which some of their lettered men give of the
persons of some of the inhabitants on our globe. And not satisfied 25
with the most solemn asseverations, they sometimes pretend to have
been eye witnesses of what they describe.

A christian doctor in one of his principal performances* says that
it was not impossible for a whole nation to have but one eye in the

* Augustin. de Civit. Dei, lib. xvi. p. 422.

6-7 prejudiced] 62; *om. PL*

7 made me] 62; taught me to *PL*

19 should they] 62; ought they to *PL*

22 mention] 62; tell *PL*

25 some of the inhabitants] 62; certain people *PL*

And not] 62; Not *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 11 March 1760.

² From this point through the quotation from Mayole in the next to last paragraph Goldsmith is making a considerably condensed and slightly rearranged translation of d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises*, lettre xxxi (ii. 2-10).

middle of the forehead. He is not satisfied with leaving it in doubt; but in another work† assures us, that the fact was certain, and that he himself was an eye witness of it. *When, says he, I took a journey into Ethiopia in company with several other servants of Christ, in order*
 5 *to preach the gospel there; I beheld in the southern provinces of that country a nation which had only one eye in the midst of their foreheads.*

You will, no doubt, be surprized, reverend Fum, with this author's effrontery; but alas he is not alone in this story; he has only borrowed it from several others who wrote before him. Solinus
 10 creates another nation of Cyclops, the Arimaspians who inhabit those countries that border on the Caspian sea. This author goes on to tell us of a people of India, who have but one leg and one eye, and yet are extremely active, run with great swiftness, and live by hunting. These people we scarce know how to pity or admire; but
 15 the men whom Pliny calls Cynamolci, who have got the heads of dogs really deserve our compassion. Instead of language they express their sentiments by barking. Solinus confirms what Pliny mentions; and Simon Mayole, a French bishop, talks of them as of particular and familiar acquaintances. *After passing the deserts of Egypt, says*
 20 *he, we meet with the Kunokephaloi, who inhabit those regions that border on Ethiopia; they live by hunting; they cannot speak, but whistle; their chins resemble a serpent's head; their hands are armed with long sharp claws; their breast resembles that of a greyhound; and they excel in swiftness and agility.* Would you think it, my friend, that
 25 these odd kind of people are, notwithstanding their figure, excessively delicate; not even an alderman's wife, or a Chinese mandarine, can excel them in this particular. *These people, continues our faithful bishop, never refuse wine; love roast and boiled meat; they are particularly curious in having their meat well dressed, and spurn at it if in the*
 30 *least tainted. When the Ptolomies reigned in Egypt (says he a little farther on) those men with dog's heads taught Grammar and Music.* For men who had no voices to teach music, and who could not speak to teach Grammar, is, I confess, a little extraordinary. Did ever the disciples of Fohi broach any thing more ridiculous?

35 Hitherto we have seen men with heads strangely deformed, and

† Id. ad fratres in Eremito, serm. xxxvii.

7 Fum] 62; Fum Hoam PL

17 barking] 62; starting PL

26 a Chinese] PL; Chinese 62

32 For men] 62; Men PL

with dog's heads; but what would you say if you heard of men without any heads at all. Pomponius Mela, Solinus, and Aulus Gellius, describe them to our hand: "The Blemiæ have a nose, eyes, and mouth on their breasts; or, as others will have it, placed in their shoulders." One would think that these authors had an antipathy 5 to the human form, and were resolved to make a new figure of their own: but let us do them justice, though they sometimes deprive us of a leg, an arm, an head, or some such trifling part of the body; they often as liberally bestow upon us something that we wanted before. Simon Mayole seems our particular friend in this respect: if he has 10 denied heads to one part of mankind, he has given tails to another. He describes many of the English of his time, which is not more than an hundred years ago, as having tails. His own words are as follow. *In England there are some families which have tails, as a punishment for deriding an Augustin Friar sent by S. Gregory, and who 15 preached in Dorsetshire.* They sewed the tails of different animals to his cloaths; but soon they found those tails entailed on them and their posterity for ever. It is certain the author had some ground for this description; many of the English wear tails to their wigs to this very day, as a mark, I suppose, of the antiquity of their families, and 20 perhaps as a symbol of those tails with which they were formerly distinguished by nature.

You see, my friend, there is nothing so ridiculous that has not at some time been said by some philosopher. The writers of books in Europe seem to think themselves authorised to say what they please; 25 and an ingenious philosopher among them‡ has openly asserted, that he would undertake to persuade the whole republic of readers to believe that the sun was neither the cause of light nor heat; if he could only get six philosophers on his side. Farewell.

‡ Fontenelle.

3 hand] 62; hands *PL*

4 placed in] *PL*; placed on 62

5 One] *PL*; *par.* 62

10 respect] 62; particular *PL*

15 deriding] 62; their deriding *PL*

16 sewed] 62; sewed, it seems, *PL*

19 wear] 62; wearing *PL*

21 a symbol] 62; symbolical *PL*

26 and] 62; *om.* *PL*

27 would undertake to] 62; could *PL*

28 that the sun . . . the cause] 62; the sun to be the cause neither *PL*

29 side. Farewell] 62; side of the question. Adieu *PL*

LETTER XVII.¹

[Of the war now carried on between France and England, with its frivolous motives.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

- WERE an Asiatic politician to read the treaties of peace and friendship that have been annually making for more than an hundred years among the inhabitants of Europe, he would probably be surpriz'd how it should ever happen that christian princes could quarrel among each other. Their compacts for peace are drawn up with the utmost precision, and ratified with the greatest solemnity; to these each party promises a sincere and inviolable obedience, and all wears the appearance of open friendship and unreserved reconciliation.
- Yet, notwithstanding those treaties, the people of Europe are almost continually at war. There is nothing more easy than to break a treaty ratified in all the usual forms, and yet neither party be the aggressor. One side for instance breaks a trifling article by mistake; the opposite party upon this makes a small but premeditated reprisal; this brings on a return of greater from the other; both sides complain of injuries and infractions; war is declar'd; they beat, are beaten; some two or three hundred thousand men are killed, they grow tired, leave off just where they began; and so sit coolly down to make new treaties.²
- The English and French seem to place themselves foremost among the champion states of Europe. Though parted by a narrow sea, yet are they entirely of opposite characters; and from their vicinity are taught to fear and admire each other. They are at present engaged in a very destructive war, have already spilled much blood,

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Thursday, 13 March 1760.

² Prior compares James Thomson, *The Castle of Indolence*, l. lv:

But what most showed the vanity of life
Was to behold the nations all on fire,
In cruel broils engaged, and deadly strife:
Most Christian kings, inflamed by black desire,
With honourable ruffians in their hire,
Cause war to rage, and blood around to pour.
Of this sad work when each begins to tire,
They sit them down just where they were before,
Till for new scenes of woe peace shall their force restore.

are excessively irritated; and all upon account of one side's desiring to wear greater quantities of *furs* than the other.

The pretext of the war is about some lands a thousand leagues off; a country cold, desolate, and hideous; a country belonging to a people who were in possession for time immemorial. The savages 5 of Canada claim a property in the country in dispute; they have all the pretensions which long possession can confer.¹ Here they had reigned for ages without rivals in dominion, and knew no enemies but the prowling bear or insidious tyger;² their native forests produced all the necessaries of life, and they found ample luxury in the 10 enjoyment. In this manner they might have continued to live to eternity, had not the English been informed that those countries produced furs in great abundance. From that moment the country became an object of desire; it was found that furs were things very much wanted in England; the ladies edged some of their cloaths 15 with furs, and muffs were worn both by gentlemen and ladies. In short, furs were found indispensably necessary for the happiness of the state; and the king was consequently petitioned to grant not only the country of Canada, but all the savages belonging to it to the subjects of England, in order to have the people supplied with 20 proper quantities of this necessary commodity.

So very reasonable a request was immediately complied with, and large colonies were sent abroad to procure furs, and take possession. The French, who were equally in want of furs (for they were as fond of muffs and tippets as the English) made the very same request to 25

1 irritated] 62; irritated against each other *PL*

17 happiness] 62; good *PL*

18-19 not only . . . Canada, but] 62; the country of Canada, and *PL*

22 very] 62; *om. PL*

23 possession] 62; possession of the country *PL*

24-25 as fond . . . tippets as] 62; fond of muffs and tippets as well as *PL*

¹ In his article on Voltaire's Universal History in the *Monthly Review* for August 1757 Goldsmith gives 'an extract from our Author's concise account of the present war': 'A trifling quarrel between France and England, for certain savage lands, dependant on Canada, has inspired the Sovereigns of Europe with new politics. . . . Did Justice and Philosophy enter into the disputes of mankind, they would shew that both sides disputed concerning a country to which neither had the least right; but principles like these seldom influence the affairs of the world.'

² For the American tiger see Goldsmith's *An History of the Earth, and Animated Nature* (1774), iii. 244: 'There is an animal of America, which is usually called the Red Tiger, but Mr. Buffon calls it the Cougar, which, no doubt, is very different from the tiger of the east. Some, however, have thought proper to rank both together; and I will take leave to follow their example. . . .'

their monarch, and met with the same gracious reception from their king, who generously granted what was not his to give. Wherever the French landed, they called the country their own; and the English took possession wherever they came upon the same equitable pre-
 5 tensions. The harmless savages made no opposition; and could the intruders have agreed together, they might peaceably have shared this desolate country between them. But they quarrelled about the boundaries of their settlements, about grounds and rivers to which neither side could shew any other right than that of power, and
 10 which neither could occupy but by usurpation. Such is the contest, that no honest man can heartily wish success to either party.¹

The war has continued for some time with various success. At first the French seemed victorious; but the English have of late dispossessed them of the whole country in dispute. Think not, how-
 15 ever, that success on one side is the harbinger of peace: on the contrary, both parties must be heartily tired to effect even a temporary reconciliation. It should seem the business of the victorious party to offer terms of peace;² but there are many in England who, encouraged by success, are for still protracting the war.

20 The best English politicians, however, are sensible, that to keep their present conquests, would be rather a burthen than an advantage to them, rather a diminution of their strength than an encrease of power. It is in the politic as in the human constitution; if the limbs grow too large for the body, their size, instead of improving,
 25 will diminish the vigour of the whole. The colonies should always bear an exact proportion to the mother country; when they grow populous, they grow powerful, and by becoming powerful, they

1-2 from their . . . to give] 62; om. PL

¹ This sentence and part of the preceding one were borrowed from Johnson's paper 'Observations on the Present State of Affairs' in the *Literary Magazine* for 1756: 'The general subject of the present war is sufficiently known. It is allowed, on both sides, that hostilities began in America, and that the English and French quarrelled about the boundaries of their settlements, about grounds and rivers, to which, I am afraid, neither can show any other right than that of power, and which neither can occupy but by usurpation, and the dispossession of the natural lords and original inhabitants. Such is the contest, that no honest man can heartily wish success to either party' (*Works of Samuel Johnson* [Oxford, 1825], vi. 114). Goldsmith's thought in other parts of this letter may have been influenced by Johnson's article. This borrowing was pointed out by J. W. Oliver in the *Times Literary Supplement*, 18 May 1922, p. 324.

² Cf. Goldsmith's essay 'On Public Rejoicings for Victory' from the *Busy Body* for 20 October 1759: 'The only use of victory is peace. Proposals for a reconciliation are never made with so good a grace as from a victorious army.'

become independent also; thus subordination is destroyed, and a country swallowed up in the extent of its own dominions. The Turkish empire would be more formidable, were it less extensive. Were it not for those countries, which it can neither command, nor give entirely away, which it is obliged to protect, but from which it has no power to exact obedience. 5

Yet, obvious as these truths are, there are many Englishmen who are for transplanting new colonies into this late acquisition, for peopling the desarts of America with the refuse of their countrymen, and (as they express it) with the waste of an exuberant nation. 10 But who are those unhappy creatures who are to be thus drained away? Not the sickly, for they are unwelcome guests abroad as well as at home; nor the idle, for they would starve as well behind the Appalachian mountains as in the streets of London. This refuse is composed of the laborious and enterprising, of such men as can be 15 serviceable to their country at home, of men who ought to be regarded as the sinews of the people, and cherished with every degree of political indulgence. And what are the commodities which this colony when establish'd, are to produce in return? Why raw silk, hemp, and tobacco. England, therefore, must make an exchange of 20 her best and bravest subjects for raw silk, hemp, and tobacco; her hardy veterans, and honest tradesmen must be truck'd for a box of snuff or a silk petticoat.¹ Strange absurdity! Sure the politics of the Daures are not more strange, who sell their religion, their wives, and their liberty for a glass bead, or a paltry penknife. Farewell. 25

1 also] 62; *om. PL*

2 swallowed] 62; is swallowed *PL*

6 exact] 62; enforce *PL*

8 into this late acquisition] 62; *om. PL*

10 with the waste] 62; the waste *PL*

11 But] 62; And *PL*

11-12 drained away] 62; sent over *PL*

14 London] 62; this metropolis *PL*

15 such men as] 62; men who *PL*

16 of men] 62; men *PL*

19 Why raw] 62; Raw *PL*

21-22 her hardy] 62; their hardy *PL*

25 penknife. Farewell] 62; looking-glass. Adieu *PL*

¹ The paragraph to this point and all the preceding paragraph are paralleled in Goldsmith's essay 'Some Thoughts Preliminary to a General Peace' in the *Weekly Magazine*, No. I, for 29 December 1759 (see below, III, pp. 32-33).

LETTER XVIII.¹

[The story of the Chinese Matron.]

*From Lien Chi Altangi, to *** merchant in Amsterdam.*

THE English love their wives with much passion, the Hollanders
 5 with much prudence. The English when they give their hands,
 frequently give their hearts; the Dutch give the hand, but keep the
 heart wisely in their own possession. The English love with violence,
 and expect violent love in return; the Dutch are satisfied with the
 slightest acknowledgments,² for they give little away. The English
 10 expend many of the matrimonial comforts in the first year; the
 Dutch frugally husband out their pleasures, and are always constant
 because they are always indifferent.

There seems very little difference between a Dutch bridegroom
 and a Dutch husband. Both are equally possessed of the same cool
 15 unexpecting serenity; they can see neither Elysium nor Paradise
 behind the curtain; and *Yiffrow* is not more a goddess on the wed-
 ding night, than after twenty years matrimonial acquaintance. On
 the other hand, many of the English marry, in order to have one
 happy month in their lives; they seem incapable of looking beyond
 20 that period; they unite in hopes of finding rapture, and disappointed
 in that, disdain ever to accept of happiness. From hence we see
 open hatred ensue; or what is worse, concealed disgust under the
 appearance of fulsome endearment. Much formality, great civility,
 and studied compliments are exhibited in public; cross looks, sulky
 25 silence, or open recrimination, fill up their hours of private entertain-
 ment.

Hence I am taught, whenever I see a new married couple more
 than ordinarily fond before faces, to consider them as attempting to
 impose upon the company or themselves, either hating each other
 30 heartily, or consuming that stock of love in the beginning of their
 course which should serve them through their whole journey.

25-26 entertainment] 62; amusement PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Saturday, 15 March 1760.² See Goldsmith's remark in the *Enquiry*: 'The charming pedants [in France] are not to be caught like some damsels to be seen in Holland, by dumb shew, by a squeeze of the hand, or the ogling of a broad eye . . .' (above, I, p. 299). Cf. also his remark in a letter written from Leyden in 1754 that 'a Dutch Lady burns nothing about her Phlegmatick admirer but his Tobacco' (*Collected Letters*, p. 22).

Neither side should expect those instances of kindness which are inconsistent with true freedom or happiness to bestow. Love, when founded in the heart, will shew itself in a thousand unpremeditated sallies of fondness; but every cool deliberate exhibition of the passion, only argues little understanding, or great insincerity.

Choang¹ was the fondest husband, and Hansi the most endearing wife in all the kingdom of Korea: they were a pattern of conjugal bliss; the inhabitants of the country around saw, and envied their felicity; wherever Choang came, Hansi was sure to follow; and in all the pleasures of Hansi, Choang was admitted a partner. They walked hand in hand wherever they appeared; shewing every mark of mutual satisfaction, embracing, kissing, their mouths were for ever joined, and to speak in the language of anatomy, it was with them one perpetual anastomosis.²

Their love was so great, that it was thought nothing could interrupt their mutual peace; when an accident happened, which, in some measure, diminished the husband's assurance of his wife's fidelity; for love so refin'd as his, was subject to a thousand little disquietudes. Happening to go one day alone among the tombs that lay at some distance from his house, he there perceived a lady dressed in the deepest mourning (being cloathed all over in white)³ fanning the wet clay that was raised over one of the graves with a large fan, which she held in her hand. Choang, who had early been taught wisdom in the school of Lao, was unable to assign a cause for her present employment; and coming up, civilly demanded the reason. Alas, replied the lady, her eyes bathed in tears; how is it

¹ Neither] 62; Professions, caresses, and open endearments, are very equivocal marks of passion; and neither *PL*

¹¹ shewing] 62; kissing, embracing, and shewing *PL*

¹²⁻¹⁴ satisfaction, embracing . . . perpetual anastomosis] 62; satisfaction *PL*

¹⁹ Happening] *PL*; *par.* 62

²⁴ Lao,] 62; Lao, the lawgiver *PL*

¹ The story that follows, though not its phraseology, is derived from a Chinese 'novel' entitled 'Tyen, or the Chinese Matron', in Du Halde, ii. 168-74. Goldsmith greatly abridges his source, alters some details, and adds others (e.g. the lover's 'pair of artificial whiskers that reached down to his toes'), and changes the ending: in Du Halde, Chwang, after the death of his wife, 'set out once more to travel, fully determined never to marry again; and meeting at length with his Master *Lau tse*, remained with him the rest of his Life . . .' (p. 174).

² Johnson's *Dictionary* (1755) defines this as 'The inoculation of vessels, or the opening of one vessel into another; as, of the arteries into the veins'.

³ In Du Halde also the lady is 'in deep Mourning, being clad in a long white Sack-cloth Gown' (ii. 168).

possible to survive the loss of my husband, who lies buried in this grave, he was the best of men, the tenderest of husbands; with his dying breath he bid me never marry again till the earth over his grave should be dry; and here you see me steadily resolving to obey
 5 his will, and endeavouring to dry it with my fan. I have employed two whole days in fulfilling his commands, and am determined not to marry till they are punctually obeyed, even though his grave should take up four days in drying.

Choang, who was struck with the widow's beauty, could not,
 10 however, avoid smiling at her haste to be married; but, concealing the cause of his mirth, civilly invited her home; adding, that he had a wife who might be capable of giving her some consolation. As soon as he and his guest were returned, he imparted to Hansi in private what he had seen, and could not avoid expressing his un-
 15 easiness, that such might be his own case if his dearest wife should one day happen to survive him. It is impossible to describe Hansi's resentment at so unkind a suspicion. As her passion for him was not only great, but extremely delicate, she employ'd tears, anger, frowns, and exclamations, to chide his suspicions; the widow herself
 20 was inveigh'd against; and Hansi declared she was resolved never to sleep under the same roof with a wretch, who, like her, could be guilty of such barefac'd inconstancy. The night was cold and stormy, however, the stranger was obliged to seek another lodging, for Choang was not disposed to resist, and Hansi would have her way.
 25 The widow had scarce been gone an hour, when an old disciple of Choang's, whom he had not seen for many years, came to pay him a visit. He was received with the utmost ceremony, placed in the most honourable seat at supper, and the wine began to circulate with great freedom. Choang and Hansi exhibited open marks of
 30 mutual tenderness, and unfeigned reconciliation: nothing could equal their apparent happiness; so fond an husband, so obedient a wife, few could behold without regretting their own infelicity. When, lo! their happiness was at once disturbed by a most fatal

5 fan] 62; fan; it is now almost dry *PL*

7-8 his grave . . . in drying] 62; that should not happen these three days *PL*

16 It] *PL*; *par.* 62

17 suspicion. As] 62; suspicion; as *PL*

18 delicate, she] 62; delicate. She *PL*

19 suspicions] 62; ill nature *PL*

26 years] 62; years before *PL*

32-33 few could . . . infelicity. When] 62; were no where else to be seen. In short, few could behold them without envy; when *PL*

accident. Choang fell lifeless in an apoplectic fit upon the floor. Every method was used, but in vain, for his recovery. Hansi was at first inconsolable for his death: after some hours, however, she found spirits to read his last will. The ensuing day she began to moralize and talk wisdom; the next day she was able to comfort the young disciple; and, on the third, to shorten a long story, they both agreed to be married. 5

There was now no longer mourning in the apartments; the body of Choang was now thrust into an old coffin, and placed in one of the meanest rooms, there to lie unattended until the time prescribed by law for his interment. In the mean time Hansi, and the young disciple, were arrayed in the most magnificent habits; the bride wore in her nose a jewel of immense price, and her lover was dressed in all the finery of his former master, together with a pair of artificial whiskers that reached down to his toes. The hour of their nuptials was arrived; the whole family sympathized with their approaching happiness; the apartments were brightened up with lights that diffused the most exquisite perfume, and a lustre more bright than noon day. The lady expected her youthful lover from an inner apartment with impatience; when his servant approaching with terror in his countenance, informed her, that his master was fallen into a fit, which would certainly be mortal, unless the heart of a man lately dead could be obtained, and applied to his breast. She scarce waited to hear the end of his story, when, tucking up her cloaths, she ran with a mattock in her hand to the coffin, where Choang lay, resolving to apply the heart of her dead husband as a cure for the living. She therefore struck the lid with the utmost violence. In a few blows the coffin flew open, when the body, which, to all appearance had been dead, began to move. Terrified at the sight, Hansi dropped the mattock, and Choang walked out, astonished at his own situation, 30

4 his last] 62; the *PL*

5 next day] 62; next *PL*

14 together with] 62; and had *PL*

15 down] 62; almost down *PL*

19 from] *PL*; in 62

23 lately dead] 62; newly killed *PL* breast.] 62; forehead. Hansi, with the utmost consternation, demanded whether the heart of a man lately dead would not do? It was answered, that it might possibly effect a cure; but that dispatch was absolutely requisite. *PL*

24 story] 62; reply *PL*

25 she ran] 62; and running *PL*

26-27 resolving to . . . She therefore] 62; she *PL*

his wife's unusual magnificence, and her more amazing surprise. He went among the apartments, unable to conceive the cause of so much splendor. He was not long in suspense before his domestics informed him of every transaction since he first became insensible.

5 He could scarce believe what they told him, and went in pursuit of Hansi herself, in order to receive more certain information, or to reproach her infidelity. But she prevented his reproaches: he found her weltering in blood; for she had stabbed herself to the heart, being unable to survive her shame and disappointment.

10 Choang, being a philosopher, was too wise to make any loud lamentations; he thought it best to bear his loss with serenity: so, mending up the old coffin where he had lain himself, he placed his faithless spouse in his room; and, unwilling that so many nuptial preparations should be expended in vain, he the same night married
15 the widow with the large fan. As they both were apprised of the foibles of each other before-hand, they knew how to excuse them after marriage. They lived together for many years in great tranquility, and not expecting rapture, made a shift to find contentment. Farewell.

20

LETTER XIX.¹

[The English method of treating women caught in adultery. The Russian method.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

25 **T**HE gentleman dressed in black, who was my companion thro' Westminster Abbey, came yesterday to pay me a visit; and after drinking tea, we both resolved to take a walk together, in order to enjoy the freshness of the country, which now begins to resume its verdure. Before we got out of the suburbs, however,²
30 we were stopped in one of the streets by a crowd of people gathered

¹ his wife's] 62; at his wife's *PL*

² unable to] 62; but could not *PL*

¹⁴ he] 62; *om. PL*

¹⁵ As] *PL*; *par. 62*

¹⁸⁻¹⁹ made a . . . contentment. Farewell.] 62; found content. *PL*

³⁰ gathered] 62; who were gathered *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 18 March 1760.

² What follows in this paragraph and in part of the next is, as Sells has pointed out

in a circle round a man and his wife, who seemed too loud and too angry to be understood. The people were highly pleased with the dispute, which upon enquiry we found to be between Dr. Cacafogo, an apothecary, and his wife. The doctor, it seems, coming unexpectedly into his wife's apartment, found a gentleman there in 5 circumstances not in the least equivocal. The doctor, who was a person of nice honour, resolving to revenge the flagrant insult, immediately flew to the chimney-piece, and taking down a rusty blunderbuss, drew the trigger upon the defiler of his bed; the delinquent would certainly have been shot through the head, but 10 that the piece had not been charged for many years. The gallant made a shift to escape through the window, but the lady still remained; and as she well knew her husband's temper, undertook to manage the quarrel without a second. He was furious, and she loud; their noise had gathered all the mob who charitably assembled on 15 the occasion, not to prevent, but to enjoy the quarrel.

Alas, said I to my companion, what will become of this unhappy

3 Cacafogo] 62; Carbuncle *PL*

6 not in the least equivocal] 62; even too strong for his suspicion *PL* The]
PL; *par*. 62

9-10 the delinquent . . . been shot] 62; and would have shot him *PL*

14 without a second] 62; alone *PL* loud] 62; was loud *PL*

15 charitably] 62; were *PL*

16 the occasion] 62; this occasion *PL*

17 unhappy] 62; poor unhappy *PL*

(p. 105), derived from d'Argens's *Lettres juives*, lettre i (i. 12-13): 'A deux journées de Lion, en descendant dans l'hotelerie, nous entendimes un bruit étonnant, & nous vimes beaucoup de gens assemblés devant la porte d'une maison voisine. Nous nous informames de ce qui pouvoit causer cette émeute: un homme, qui se trouva-là, nous en apprit le sujet. Messieurs, nous dit il, le logis où vous voiez tous les voisins du quartier, appartient à Monsieur Mirobolan, Apoticaire. . . . Il a trouvé Madame Mirobolan en flagrant delit avec un de ses garçons de boutique, la fureur l'a saisi, il a pris une vieille arquebuse, a voulu la decharger sur son rival: le fusil, plus sage & plus benin que lui, a refusé de prendre feu, l'amant a sauté par une fenêtre dans la rue, la femme a appelé les voisins, ils sont accourus, & ont trouvé Monsieur Mirobolan, la rage dans les yeux, & le fusil en main, assomant sa chere moitié de coups de crosse; l'on a eu grand'peine à la sauver de son courroux. Et que fera-t-on, Monsieur, lui dis-je, à cette femme adultere? Et que voulés-vous qu'on lui fasse? me repondit-il. Elle va porter plainte contre son mari, qui, n'ayant aucun témoin de l'affront qu'il pretend avoir été fait à son honneur par le garçon de boutique, sera obligé de lui donner une pension chés ses parens, où elle va se retirer. Vous n'y pensés pas, repliquai-je. Vous voulés obliger un mari à paier d'argent comptant les infidélités de sa femme! Ce sont nos Loix, me répondit-il; & nos Jurisconsultes, Exemples des Maris débonnaires, les ont approuvées & soutenues par des milliers de volumes.'

- creature thus caught in adultery! Believe me, I pity her from my heart; her husband, I suppose, will shew her no mercy. Will they burn her as in India, or behead her as in Persia; will they load her with stripes as in Turkey, or keep her in perpetual imprisonment, as with us in China? Prythee what is the wife's punishment in England for such offences? When a lady is thus caught tripping, replied my companion, they never punish her, but the husband. You surely jest, interrupted I; I am a foreigner, and you would abuse my ignorance. I am really serious, returned he; Dr. Cacafogo has caught his wife in the act; but as he had no witnesses, his small testimony goes for nothing; the consequence therefore of his discovery will be, that she may be packed off to live among her relations, and the doctor must be obliged to allow her a separate maintenance. Amazing, cried I; is it not enough that she is permitted to live separate from the object she detests, but must he give her money to keep her in spirits too? That he must, says my guide; and be called a cuckold by all his neighbours into the bargain. The men will laugh at him, the ladies will pity him; and all that his warmest friends can say in his favour, will be, that the *poor good soul has never had any harm in him*. I want patience, interrupted I; what! are there no private chastisements for the wife; no schools of penitence to shew her her folly; no rods for such delinquents? Psha man, replied he smiling; if every delinquent among us were to be treated in your manner, one half of the kingdom would flog the other.¹
- I must confess, my dear Fum, that if I were an English husband, of all things I would take care not to be jealous, nor busily pry into

2 shew her] 62; shew PL

7 replied my companion,] 62; om. PL husband] 62; husband, replied my companion PL

8 I am . . . you would] 62; you know me to be a foreigner, and PL

9 Cacafogo] 62; Carbuncle PL

10 wife in the act] 62; wife, I own PL small] 62; om. PL

12 she] 62; madam PL

19 never had any] 62; no PL

22 he] 62; my companion PL

25 Fum] 62; Fum Hoam PL

26 jealous] 62; jealous of my wife PL

¹ For a similar remark in a similar context see d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises*, lettre xliii (ii. 132-3): 'Un François . . . me dit en riant: *Si tous les gens qui sont cocus, étoient fouettés dans ma patrie, la moitié de la France s'occupoit tour à tour à donner la discipline à l'autre.*'

those secrets my wife was pleased to keep from me. Should I detect her infidelity, what is the consequence? If I calmly pocket the abuse, I am laugh'd at by her and her gallant; if I talk my griefs aloud like a tragedy heroe, I am laugh'd at by the whole world. The course then I'd take would be, whenever I went out, to tell my wife where I was going, least I should unexpectedly meet her abroad in company with some dear deceiver. Whenever I returned, I would use a peculiar rap at the door, and give four loud hems as I walked deliberately up the stair-case.¹ I would never inquisitively peep under her bed, or look behind the curtains. And even though I knew the captain was there, I would calmly take a dish of my wife's cool tea, and talk of the army with reverence.

Of all nations, the Russians seem to me to behave most wisely in such circumstances. The wife promises her husband never to let him see her transgressions of this nature; and he as punctually promises, whenever she is so detected, without the least anger, to beat her without mercy;² so they both know what each has to expect; the lady transgresses, is beaten, taken again into favour, and all goes on as before.

1 those] *PL*; these 62 my wife] 62; she *PL* me. Should] 62; me; for should *PL*

2 her infidelity] 62; my wife's infidelity *PL*

4 world] 62; world, treated like a monster, and universally said to wear horns *PL*

5 I'd take would be, whenever] 62; I would take is thus: Whenever *PL* to tell] 62; I would tell *PL*

9 stair-case.] 62; stairs; and *PL*

10 curtains. And] 62; curtains, *PL*

11 there,] 62; there. *PL*

13 nations] 62; nations I have seen *PL*

16 without the least anger,] 62; *om. PL*

18 taken again into favour,] 62; *om. PL*

¹ Cf. a further passage from lettre xliii of the *Lettres chinoises* (ii. 135-6): 'Supposons un homme, dont le tempérament demande absolument le mariage. . . Il trouve sa femme dans un rendez-vous, il la surprend avec un galant, que faut-il qu'il fasse? S'il parle, s'il fait du bruit & qu'il s'en tienne-là, il devient la risée du Public, & qui pis est, de sa femme & de son galant. . .'

'Si j'étois Européen, lorsque je rentrerois chez moi, je ferois toujours assez de bruit pour être entendu de fort loin, & avant de sortir du logis, je m'informerai des endroits où doit aller ma femme, pour ne m'y jamais trouver. . .'

² There is a somewhat similar account in John Mottley's *The History of the Life of Peter I* (1739), i. 130: '... among other Presents [sent by the groom to the bride] sometimes there was a Whip, to let the Woman know what she was to expect, if she proved disobedient, or broke the marriage Vow; if this odd Sort of Present could be acceptable to the Women in the Time of Courtship, it would almost make one believe the ridiculous Assertion of some Authors, that the *Russian* Women loved their Husbands the better for beating them.'

When a Russian young lady, therefore, is to be married, her father, with a cudgel in his hand, asks the bridegroom, whether he chuses this virgin for his bride? to which the other replies in the affirmative. Upon this, the father turning the lady three times
 5 round, and giving her three strokes with his cudgel on the back; *my dear, cries he, these are the last blows you are ever to receive from your tender father, I resign my authority, and my cudgel to your husband; he knows better than me the use of either.* The bridegroom knows decorums too well to accept of the cudgel abruptly, he assures
 10 the father that the lady will never want it, and that he would not for the world make any use of it. But the father, who knows what the lady may want, better than he, insists upon his acceptance. Upon this, there follows a scene of Russian politeness, while one refuses, and the other offers the cudgel. The whole, however, ends with the
 15 bridegroom's taking it, upon which the lady drops a curtesy in token of obedience, and the ceremony proceeds as usual.¹ There is something excessively fair and open in this method of courtship. By this, both sides are prepared for all the matrimonial adventures that are to follow. Marriage has been compared to a game of skill
 20 for life; it is generous thus in both parties to declare they are sharpeners in the beginning. In England, I am told both sides use every art to conceal their defects from each other before marriage, and the rest of their lives may be regarded as doing penance for their former dissimulation.² Farewell.

1 When] 62; Whenever PL

6 dear] 62; dear daughter PL are ever to] 62; will ever PL

8 husband; he] 62; husband, who PL

10-11 it, and . . . it. But] 62; it; PL

12-13 acceptance. Upon this] 62; acceptance, upon which PL

16 ceremony proceeds] 62; rest of the ceremony is performed PL There] PL;

par. 62

20 thus in both parties] 62; in both parties, therefore, PL

22-23 before marriage, and] 62; while they are lovers; when such a faulty couple are married, all PL

23 doing] 62; a PL

24 Farewell] 62; Adieu PL

¹ The paragraph to this point is a free translation of a passage describing 'les mariages des artisans & des personnes du bas peuple' in Russia, from lettre xlii of the *Lettres chinoises* (ii. 117-18).

² Cf. *Lettres juives*, lettre xxxii (ii. 19): 'Souvent deux Personnes travaillent pendant six Mois à se tromper: elles s'épousent à la fin, & se punissent mutuellement le Reste de leur Vie de leur Dissimulation.'

LETTER XX.¹

[Some account of the republic of letters in England.]

*From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Cere-
monial Academy at Pekin, in China.*

THE republic of letters is a very common expression among the 5
Europeans; and yet when applied to the learned of Europe, is
the most absurd that can be imagined, since nothing is more unlike
a republic than the society which goes by that name. From this
expression one would be apt to imagine, that the learned were
united into a single body, joining their interests, and concurring in 10
the same design. From this one might be apt to compare them to our
literary societies in China, where each acknowledges a just sub-
ordination; and all contribute to build the temple of science, with-
out attempting from ignorance or envy to obstruct each other.

But very different is the state of learning here; every member of 15
this fancied republic is desirous of governing, and none willing to
obey; each looks upon his fellow as a rival, not an assistant in the
same pursuit. They calumniate, they injure, they despise, they
ridicule each other: if one man writes a book that pleases, others shall
write books to shew that he might have given still greater pleasure, 20
or should not have pleased.² If one happens to hit upon something
new, there are numbers ready to assure the public that all this was
no novelty to them or the learned; that Cardanus or Brunus, or
some other author too dull to be generally read, had anticipated the
discovery. Thus, instead of uniting like the members of a common- 25
wealth, they are divided into almost as many factions as there are
men; and their jarring constitution instead of being stiled a republic
of letters should be entituled, an anarchy of literature.

It is true, there are some of superior abilities who reverence and

11 to our] 62; with our *PL*

16 willing] 62; is willing *PL*

19 pleases, others] 62; pleases twenty, others *PL*

21 pleased] 62; pleased at all *PL*

23 them] 62; themselves *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Thursday, 20 March 1760.

² Cf. Goldsmith's remarks in the *Bee*: 'Projectors in a state are generally rewarded above their deserts; projectors in the republic of letters, never. If wrong, every inferior dunce thinks himself entituled to laugh at their disappointment; if right, men of superior talents think their honour engaged to oppose, since every new discovery is a tacit diminution of their own pre-eminence' (above, I, p. 430).

esteem each other; but their mutual admiration is not sufficient to shield off the contempt of the crowd. The wise are but few, and they praise with a feeble voice; the vulgar are many, and roar in reproaches. The truly great seldom unite in societies, have few
 5 meetings, no cabals; the dunces hunt in full cry till they have run down a reputation, and then snarl and fight with each other about dividing the spoil. Here you may see the compilers, and the book answerers of every month, when they have cut up some respectable name, most frequently reproaching each other with stupidity and
 10 dullness: resembling the wolves of the Russian forest, who prey upon venison, or horse-flesh when they can get it; but in cases of necessity lying in wait to devour each other. While they have new books to cut up,¹ they make a hearty meal; but if this resource should unhappily fail, then it is that critics eat up critics, and com-
 15 pilers rob from compilations.

Confucius observes that it is the duty of the learned to unite society more closely, and to persuade men to become citizens of the world; but the authors I refer to, are not only for disuniting society, but kingdoms also;² if the English are at war with France, the
 20 dunces of France think it their duty to be at war with those of England. Thus Freron, one of their first rate scribblers, thinks proper to characterise all the English writers in the gross. Their whole merit, says he, 'consists in exaggeration, and often in extravagance; correct their pieces as you please, there still remains a leaven which
 25 *corrupts* the whole. They sometimes discover genius, but not the smallest share of taste, England is not a soil for the plants of genius to thrive in.'³ This is open enough, with not the least adulation in the picture; but hear what a Frenchman of acknowledged abilities says upon the same subject. 'I am at a loss to determine in what we

9 reproaching] 62; reproach PL

10 resembling] 62; they resemble PL

12 lying in wait to] 62; om. PL

¹ In the *Bee* Goldsmith speaks of 'the pack of critics, who, probably, have no other occupation but that of cutting up every thing new' (above, I, p. 451).

² In *Lettres chinoises*, lettre lxxvi (iii. 111-23), d'Argens ridicules literary rivalry between the nations of Europe. Goldsmith seems to have borrowed no specific details.

³ From Fréron's *Année littéraire* for 1757 (iii. 64-65): 'Pourquoi familiariser avec des écrivains dont le mérite est dans l'exagération & souvent dans l'extravagance? On a beau corriger leurs pièces: il y reste toujours un mauvais levain, & ce levain corrompt (passez-moi cette expression) la meilleure pâte dramatique. Chez l'Anglois beaucoup d'auteurs comiques font paroître du génie; pas un seul ne montre du goût. . . . Ce n'est pas dans le sol Anglois que naissent ces plantes heureuses. . . .'

excel the English, or where they excel us; when I compare the merits of both in any one species of literary composition, so many reputable and pleasing writers present themselves from either country, that my judgment rests in suspense: I am pleased with the disquisition, without finding the object of my enquiry.' But lest you 5 should think the French alone are faulty in this respect, hear how an English journalist delivers his sentiments of them. 'We are amazed, says he, to find so many works translated from the French, while we have such numbers neglected of our own. In our opinion, notwithstanding their fame throughout the rest of Europe, the 10 French are the most contemptible reasoners (we had almost said writers) that can be imagined. However, nevertheless, excepting, &c.' Another English writer, Shaftsbury, if I remember, on the contrary, says, that the French authors are pleasing and judicious, more clear, more methodical, and entertaining than those of his own 15 country.¹

From these opposite pictures, you perceive that the good authors of either country praise, and the bad revile each other; and yet, perhaps, you'll be surprized that indifferent writers should thus be the most apt to censure, as they have the most to apprehend from 20 recrimination; you may, perhaps, imagine that such as are possessed of fame themselves, should be most ready to declare their opinions, since what they say, might pass for decision. But the truth happens to be, that the great are solicitous only of raising their own reputations, while the opposite class, alas! are solicitous of bringing every 25 reputation down to a level with their own.

But let us acquit them of malice and envy: a critic is often guided by the same motives that direct his author. The author endeavours to persuade us, that he has written a good book: the critic is equally solicitous to shew that he could write a better, had he thought 30

5 the object of my enquiry] 62; what I sought after *PL*

7 of them] 62; *om. PL*

18 bad] 62; bad ones *PL*

20 the most apt] 62; most apt *PL*

21 such as are] 62; those *PL*

23 say, might] 62; might say, would *PL* decision] 62; decisions *PL*

25 class] 62; *om. PL*

¹ For Shaftesbury's qualified praise of French writers see *Advice to an Author* (1710), part ii, sec. i, and part iii, sec. iii, in *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, &c., ed. J. M. Robertson (1900), i. 142-3, 216 n. In neither passage are the French made superior to the English.

proper. A critic is a being possessed of all the vanity, but not the genius, of a scholar, incapable, from his native weakness, of lifting himself from the ground, he applies to contiguous merit for support, makes the sportive sallies of another's imagination his serious employment, pretends to take our feelings under his care, teaches
 5 where to condemn, where to lay the emphasis of praise, and may, with as much justice, be called a man of taste, as the Chinese who measures his wisdom by the length of his nails.¹

If then a book, spirited or humourous, happens to appear in the
 10 republic of letters, several critics are in waiting to bid the public not to laugh at a single line of it, for themselves had read it; and they know what is most proper to excite laughter. Other critics contradict the fulminations of this tribunal, call them all spiders,² and assure the public, that they ought to laugh without restraint. Another set
 15 are in the mean time quietly employed in writing notes to the book, intended to shew the particular passages to be laughed at; when these are out, others still there are who write notes upon notes. Thus a single new book employs not only the paper-makers, the printers, the press-men, the book-binders, the hawkers, but twenty
 20 critics, and as many compilers. In short, the body of the learned may be compared to a Persian army, where there are many pioneers, several sutlers, numberless servants, women and children in abundance, and but few soldiers.³ Adieu.

1 A critic is] 62; Thus is he *PL*

9 then] 62; *om. PL* happens] 62; should happen *PL*

11 to laugh] 62; laugh *PL*

13 all] 62; malevolent dunces and *PL*

23 and but] 62; but *PL*

¹ See Du Halde, i. 281: '... the *Literati* and the Doctors . . . , especially if they are of base Extraction, never pare the Nails of their little Fingers, affecting to let them grow an Inch long, or more, with a Design to let People see that they are not driven by Necessity to work for their Living.' Cf. Le Comte, i. 232.

² Cf. the conclusion of a dialogue in Goldsmith's review of William Dunkin, probably written about the same time as this letter: 'The public are a parcel of blockheads, and all blockheads are critics, and all critics are spiders, and spiders are a set of reptiles that all the world despises' (above, I, p. 232).

³ Cf. Goldsmith's remark in the *Weekly Magazine* for 12 January 1760: 'The republic of letters, crowded with such unnecessary dependants [i.e. the critics], somewhat resembles the Persian armies of old, where the number principally consisted of slaves, women and children' (below, III, p. 52).

LETTER XXI.¹

[The Chinese goes to see a play.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

THE English are as fond of seeing plays acted as the Chinese; 5
but there is a vast difference in the manner of conducting them.
We play our pieces in the open air, the English theirs under cover;
we act by day-light, they by the blaze of torches. One of our plays
continues eight or ten days successively;² an English piece seldom
takes up above four hours in the representation. 10

My companion in black, with whom I am now beginning to con-
tract an intimacy, introduced me a few nights ago to the play-house,
where we placed ourselves conveniently at the foot of the stage. As
the curtain was not drawn before my arrival, I had an opportunity
of observing the behaviour of the spectators, and indulging those 15
reflections which novelty generally inspires.

The rich in general were placed in the lowest seats, and the poor
rose above them in degrees proportioned to their poverty. The order
of precedence seemed here inverted; those who were undermost all
the day now enjoyed a temporary eminence, and became masters of 20
the ceremonies. It was they who called for the music, indulging
every noisy freedom, and testifying all the insolence of beggary in
exaltation.

They who held the middle region seemed not so riotous as those
above them, nor yet so tame as those below; to judge by their looks, 25
many of them seem'd strangers there as well as myself. They were
chiefly employed during this period of expectation in eating oranges,
reading the story of the play, or making assignations.

Those who sat in the lowest rows, which are called the pit, seemed
to consider themselves as judges of the merit of the poet and the 30
performers; they were assembled partly to be amused, and partly
to shew their taste; appearing to labour under that restraint which

5 as fond . . . acted as] 62; equally fond of seeing plays acted with *PL*

21 It was they] 62; They *PL* indulging] 62; indulged *PL*

22 testifying] 62; testified *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 21 March 1760.

² See Du Halde, ii. 343: 'They [the Chinese] divide their Comedies into several Parts, which they act likewise on different Days; they are much like the Histories of some illustrious Persons, interspersed with Fable, and divided into several Chapters. . . .'

an affectation of superior discernment generally produces. My companion, however, informed me, that not one in an hundred of them knew even the first principles of criticism; that they assumed the right of being censors because there was none to contradict their
 5 pretensions; and that every man who now called himself a connoisseur, became such to all intents and purposes.

Those who sat in the boxes appeared in the most unhappy situation of all. The rest of the audience came merely for their own amusement; these rather to furnish out a part of the entertainment
 10 themselves. I could not avoid considering them as acting parts in dumb shew, not a curtesy, or nod, that was not the result of art; not a look nor a smile that was not designed for murder. Gentlemen and ladies ogled each other through spectacles; for my companion observed, that blindness was of late become fashionable; all affected
 15 indifference and ease, while their hearts at the same time burned for conquest. Upon the whole, the lights, the music, the ladies in their gayest dresses, the men with cheerfulness and expectation in their looks, all conspired to make a most agreeable picture, and to fill an heart that sympathises at human happiness with inexpressible
 20 serenity. The expected time for the play to begin at last arrived, the curtain was drawn, and the actors came on. A woman, who personated a queen, came in curtesying to the audience, who clapped their hands upon her appearance. Clapping of hands is, it seems, the manner of applauding in England: the manner is absurd; but every
 25 country, you know, has its peculiar absurdities. I was equally surprised, however, at the submission of the actress, who should have considered herself as a queen,¹ as at the little discernment of the

5 pretensions] 62; pretences *PL* who now] 62; now who *PL*

6 became such . . . and purposes] 62; found that alone sufficient to be regarded as such by all his acquaintance *PL*

7 appeared] 62; appeared to me *PL*

10 themselves] 62; of others *PL*

13 and ladies ogled each other] 62; ogled their mistresses *PL*

14 become fashionable] 62; come into fashion *PL* all] 62; while the ladies *PL*

15 while] 62; *om. PL* burned] 62; burning *PL*

19 at human happiness] 62; with human happiness like mine *PL*

20 The] *PL*; *par. 62*

22 came in] 62; first came in *PL* clapped] 62; had clapped *PL*

¹ Cf. 'On our Theatres' in the *Bee*, No. II: 'But of all the cautions to give our rising actresses, I would particularly recommend it to them never to take notice of the audience, upon any occasion whatsoever. . . . I can never pardon a lady on the stage who, when she draws the admiration of the whole audience, turns about to make them a low

audience who gave her such marks of applause before she attempted to deserve them. Preliminaries between her and the audience being thus adjusted, the dialogue was supported between her and a most hopeful youth, who acted the part of her confidant. They both appeared in extreme distress, for it seems the queen had lost a child 5 some fifteen years before, and still kept its dear resemblance next her heart,¹ while her kind companion bore a part in her sorrows. Her lamentations grew loud. Comfort is offered, but she detests the very sound. She bids them preach comfort to the winds. Upon this her husband comes in, who, seeing the queen so much afflicted, can 10 himself hardly refrain from tears or avoid partaking in the soft distress. After thus grieving through three scenes, the curtain dropp'd for the first act.

Truly said I to my companion, these kings and queens are very much disturbed at no very great misfortune; certain I am were 15 people of humbler stations to act in this manner, they would be thought divested of common sense. I had scarce finish'd this observation, when the curtain rose, and the king came on in a violent passion. His wife had, it seems, refused his proffered tenderness, had 20 spurned his royal embrace; and he seemed resolved not to survive her fierce disdain. After he had thus fretted, and the queen had fretted through the second act, the curtain was let down once more.

Now, says my companion, you perceive the king to be a man of spirit, he feels at every pore; one of your phlegmatic sons of clay 25 would have given the queen her own way, and let her come to herself by degrees; but the king is for immediate tenderness, or instant death: death and tenderness are leading passions of every modern

3 between] 62; by *PL*

7 while her kind companion bore] 62; and it was but kind in the companion to bear *PL* Her] *PL*; *par.* 62

8 grew] 62; are *PL*

11 refrain from tears or] 62; *om.* *PL*

12 thus grieving] 62; they had thus grieved *PL*

21 queen] 62; queen herself *PL*

27 leading] 62; the leading *PL*

courtesy for their applause. Such a figure no longer continues Belvidera, but at once drops into Mrs. Cibber.'

¹ In his review of Home's *Douglas* Goldsmith had mentioned as one of the 'faults' in the play 'the preposterous distress of a married Lady for a former husband, who had been dead near twenty years' (above, I, p. 11). In the play *Lady Randolph* also laments her child lost some eighteen years before.

buskin'd heroe; this moment they embrace, and the next stab, mixing daggers and kisses in every period.

I was going to second his remarks, when my attention was engrossed by a new object; a man came in balancing a straw upon his nose,¹ and the audience were clapping their hands in all the raptures of applause. To what purpose, cried I, does this unmeaning figure make his appearance; is he a part of the plot? Unmeaning do you call him, replied my friend in black; this is one of the most important characters of the whole play; nothing pleases the people more than the seeing a straw balanced; there is a great deal of meaning in the straw; there is something suited to every apprehension in the sight; and a fellow possessed of talents like these is sure of making his fortune.

The third act now began with an actor, who came to inform us that he was the villain of the play, and intended to shew strange things before all was over. He was joined by another, who seem'd as much disposed for mischief as he; their intrigues continued through this whole division. If that be a villain, said I, he must be a very stupid one, to tell his secrets without being ask'd; such soliloquies of late are never admitted in China.

The noise of clapping interrupted me once more; a child of six years old was learning to dance on the stage, which gave the ladies and mandarines infinite satisfaction. I am sorry, said I, to see the pretty creature so early learning so very bad a trade. Dancing being, I presume, as contemptible here as it is in China. Quite the reverse, interrupted my companion; dancing is a very reputable and genteel employment here; men have a greater chance for encouragement from the merit of their heels than their heads. One who jumps up

1-2 stab, mixing . . . every period] 62; stab the wayward object of their affections *PL*

7 his] 62; its *PL*

15 intended] 62; that he intended *PL*

17 their] 62; and their *PL*

20 of late] 62; *om. PL*

24 creature] 62; babby *PL*

27 employment here; men have] 62; employment; here a man has *PL*

28 their heels than their heads] 62; his heels than his head *PL*

¹ Gibbs suggests that this may be a reference to the person described in Joseph Strutt's *The Sports and Pastimes of the People of England* (1845), p. 234: 'In the middle of the eighteenth century, there was a very celebrated balance-master, named Mattocks, who made his appearance also at the Wells [Sadler's Wells]; among other tricks, he used to balance a straw with great adroitness, sometimes on one hand, sometimes on the other; and sometimes he would kick it with his foot to a considerable height, and catch it upon his nose, his chin, or his forehead.'

and flourishes his toes three times before he comes to the ground, may have three hundred a year; he who flourishes them four times, gets four hundred; but he who arrives at five is inestimable, and may demand what salary he thinks proper. The female dancers too are valued for this sort of jumping and crossing; and 'tis a cant word 5 among them, that she deserves most who shews highest. But the fourth act is begun, let us be attentive.

In the fourth act the queen finds her long lost child, now grown up into a youth of smart parts and great qualifications; wherefore she wisely considers that the crown will fit his head better than that of 10 her husband, whom she knows to be a driveler. The king discovers her design, and here comes on the deep distress; he loves the queen, and he loves the kingdom; he resolves therefore, in order to possess both, that her son must die. The queen exclaims at his barbarity; is frantic with rage, and at length overcome with sorrow, falls into a fit; 15 upon which the curtain drops, and the act is concluded.

Observe the art of the poet, cries my companion; when the queen can say no more, she falls into a fit. While thus her eyes are shut, while she is supported in the arms of Abigail, what horrors do we not fancy, we feel it in every nerve; take my word for it, that fits are the 20 true aposiopesis of modern tragedy.

The fifth act began, and a busy piece it was. Scenes shifting, trumpets sounding, mobs hallooing, carpets spreading, guards bustling from one door to another; gods, dæmons, daggers, racks and ratsbane. But whether the king was killed, or the queen was drowned, 25 or the son was poisoned, I have absolutely forgotten.

When the play was over, I could not avoid observing, that the persons of the drama appeared in as much distress in the first act as the last: how is it possible, said I, to sympathize with them through five long acts; pity is but a short lived passion;¹ I hate to hear an 30

2 year] 62; year among us *PL*

6 them.] 62; them (for I cannot call it a technical term) *PL*

18-19 thus her . . . shut, while] 62; with her eyes shut *PL*

20 fancy] 62; experience *PL*

¹ Goldsmith had made a very similar criticism of Murphy's *The Orphan of China*: "The first error in the plot of this piece is, that the pathos begins without a proper preparation of incident. The most poignant anguish begins in the second act, where Mandane . . . feels all the distress of passion, conflicting between a subject's duty and a mother's tenderness. When the poet thus attempts to move us before his time, the most he can do is to raise an equally moderate degree of pity through the whole, which all his art cannot raise into that fine agony of distress, so common among the great

- actor mouthing trifles, neither startings, strainings, nor attitudes affect me unless there be cause: after I have been once or twice deceived by those unmeaning alarms, my heart sleeps in peace, probably unaffected by the principal distress. There should be one
 5 great passion aimed at by the actor as well as the poet, all the rest should be subordinate, and only contribute to make that the greater; if the actor therefore exclaims upon every occasion in the tones of despair, he attempts to move us too soon; he anticipates the blow, he ceases to affect though he gains our applause.
- 10 I scarce perceived that the audience were almost all departed; wherefore, mixing with the crowd, my companion and I got into the street; where essaying an hundred obstacles from coach wheels and palanquin poles, like birds in their flight through the branches of a forest, after various turnings, we both at length got home in safety.
- 15 Adieu.

LETTER XXII.¹

[The Chinese philosopher's Son made a slave in Persia.]

*From Lien Chi Altangi to ***** merchant in Amsterdam.*

- THE letter which came by the way of Smyrna, and which you
 20 sent me unopened, was from my son. As I have permitted you to take copies of all those I send to China, you might have made no ceremony in opening those directed to me. Either in joy or sorrow, my friend should participate in my feelings. *It would give pleasure to see a good man pleased at my success; it would give almost equal pleasure*
 25 *to see him sympathize at my disappointment.*

- Every account I receive from the east seems to come loaded with some new affliction. My wife and daughter were taken from me, and yet I sustained the loss with intrepidity; my son is made a slave among barbarians, which was the only blow that could have reached
 30 my heart: yes, I will indulge the transports of nature for a little, in

25 *disappointment*] 62; *disappointments PL*

masters of his art. All enthusiasms are of short continuance; nor is it in the power of genius to keep our sorrows alive through five acts, unless it diversifies the object, or, in every act excites some new and unforeseen distress . . . ' (above, I, p.172). On two earlier occasions Goldsmith had described pity as 'a short-lived passion' (see Index).

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Monday, 24 March 1760.

order to shew I can overcome them in the end. *True magnanimity consists not in NEVER falling, but in RISING every time we fall.*¹

When our mighty emperor had published his displeasure at my departure, and seized upon all that was mine, my son was privately secreted from his resentment. Under the protection and guardianship of Fum Hoam, the best and the wisest of all the inhabitants of China; he was for some time instructed in the learning of the missionaries, and the wisdom of the east. But hearing of my adventures, and incited by filial piety, he was resolved to follow my fortunes, and share my distress. 10

He passed the confines of China in disguise; hired himself as a camel driver to a caravan that was crossing the desarts of Thibet, and was within one day's journey of the river Laur, which divides that country from India; when a body of wandering Tartars falling unexpectedly upon the caravan, plundered it, and made those who escaped their first fury slaves. By those he was led into the extensive and desolate regions that border on the shores of the Aral lake. Here he lived by hunting; and was obliged to supply every day a certain proportion of the spoil to regale his savage masters; his learning, his virtues, and even his beauty were qualifications that no way served to recommend him; they knew no merit but that of providing large quantities of milk and raw flesh; and were sensible of no happiness but that of rioting on the undressed meal. 20

Some merchants from Mesched, however, coming to trade with the Tartars for slaves, he was sold among the number, and led into the kingdom of Persia, where he is now detain'd. He is there obliged to watch the looks of a voluptuous and cruel master, a man fond of pleasure yet incapable of refinement, whom many years service in war has taught pride, but not bravery. That treasure which I still kept within my bosom, my child, my all that was left to me, is now a 30

9 and incited] 62; prepossessed with too favourable an idea of my understanding, and still farther incited *PL*

16 By those] 62; By those barbarians *PL*

17 Here] *PL*; *par.* 62

26 there] 62; here *PL*

27-28 a man . . . yet incapable] 62; fond of pleasure; yet is capable *PL*

29 That] *PL*; *par.* 62

30 to me] 62; me *PL*

¹ Goldsmith has almost the same sentence in Letter VII above; it is the translation of a maxim of Confucius given in Le Comte.

slave.* Good heavens, why was this; why have I been introduced into this mortal apartment, to be a spectator of my own misfortunes, and the misfortunes of my fellow creatures! wherever I turn, what a labyrinth of doubt, error, and disappointment appears: why was I brought into being; for what purposes made; from whence have I come; whither stray'd; or to what regions am I hastening? Reason cannot resolve. It lends a ray to shew the horrors of my prison, but not a light to guide me to escape them. Ye boasted revelations of the earth how little do you aid the enquiry. How am I surprized at the inconsistency of the Magi; their two principles of good and evil affright me. The Indian who bathes his visage in urine, and calls it piety, strikes me with astonishment. The christian who believes in three gods is highly absurd. The Jews who pretend that deity is pleased with the effusions of blood, are not less displeasing. I am equally surprized that rational beings can come from the extremities of the earth, in order to kiss a stone, or scatter pebbles. How contrary to reason are those; and yet all pretend to teach me to be happy. Surely all men are blind and ignorant of truth. Mankind wanders, unknowing his way from morning till the evening. Where shall we turn after happiness; or is it wisest to desist from the pursuit. Like reptiles in a corner of some stupendous palace, we peep from our holes; look about us, wonder at all we see, but are ignorant of the great architect's design: O for a revelation of himself, for a plan of his universal system: O for the reasons of our creation; or why we were created to be thus unhappy. If we are to experience no other felicity but what this life affords, then are we miserable indeed. If we are born only to look about us, repine and die;† then has heaven been guilty of injustice. If this life terminates my existence,

* This whole apostrophe seems almost literally translated from Ambulaaohamed, the Arabian poet.

4 appears] 62; *om.* PL

6 stray'd] 62; have I stray'd PL

7 resolve] 62; resolve me PL

9 enquiry] 62; enquiries PL How] PL; *par.* 62

18 Surely] PL; *par.* 62 truth] 62; the truth PL

24 his] 62; this PL

29 almost] PL; most 62

The wording is influenced by Pope's *Essay on Man*, i. 3-4:

... Life can little more supply
Than just to look about us and to die.

I despise the blessings of providence, and the wisdom of the giver. If this life be my all, let the following epitaph be written on the tomb of Altangi. *By my father's crimes I received this. By my own crimes I bequeath it to posterity.*

LETTER XXIII.¹

5

[The English subscription in favour of the French prisoners commended.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

YET while I sometimes lament the cause of humanity, and the depravity of human nature, there now and then appear gleams 10 of greatness that serve to relieve the eye oppressed with the hideous prospect, and resemble those cultivated spots that are sometimes found in the midst of an Asiatic wilderness. I see many superior excellencies among the English, which it is not in the power of all their follies to hide: I see virtues, which in other countries are 15 known only to a few, practised here by every rank of people.

I know not whether it proceeds from their superior opulence that the English are more charitable than the rest of mankind; whether by being possessed of all the conveniences of life themselves, they have more leisure to perceive the uneasy situation of the distressed; 20 whatever be the motive, they are not only the most charitable of any other nation, but most judicious in distinguishing the properest objects of compassion.

In other countries the giver is generally influenced by the immediate impulse of pity; his generosity is exerted as much to relieve 25 his own uneasy sensations, as to comfort the object in distress: in England benefactions are of a more general nature; some men of fortune and universal benevolence propose the proper objects; the wants and the merits of the petitioners are canvassed by the people;

3 *received*] 62; *receive* PL

4 *bequeath*] 62; *have bequeath'd* PL

9-13 YET while . . . Asiatic wilderness.] 62; THINK me not, my friend, one of those censorious moralists who are resolved to be pleased at nothing, who behold every object on the gloomy side, and often make faults rather than lose an opportunity of reproof. PL

21 *they*] 62; *the English* PL

22 *nation, but*] 62; *nation I have seen, but are* PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 25 March 1760.

neither passion nor pity find a place in the cool discussion; and charity is then only exerted when it has received the approbation of reason.

A late instance of this finely directed benevolence¹ forces itself so strongly on my imagination, that it in a manner reconciles me to pleasure, and once more makes me the universal friend of man. The English and French have not only political reasons to induce them to mutual hatred, but often the more prevailing motive of private interest to widen the breach; a war between other countries is carried on collectively, army fights against army, and a man's own private resentment is lost in that of the community; but in England and France the individuals of each country plunder each other at sea without redress, and consequently feel that animosity against each other which passengers do at a robber. They have for some time carried on an expensive war, and several captives have been taken on both sides. Those made prisoners by the French have been used with cruelty,² and guarded with unnecessary caution. Those taken by the English, being much more numerous, were confined in the ordinary manner; and, not being released by their countrymen, began to feel all these inconveniences which arise from want of covering and long confinement.

Their countrymen were informed of their deplorable situation; but they, more intent on annoying their enemies than relieving their friends, refused the least assistance. The English now saw thousands of their fellow-creatures starving in every prison, forsaken by those whose duty it was to protect them, labouring with disease, and

¹ nor] 62; or *PL*

² charity] 62; their charity *PL*

5-6 that it . . . of man] 62; that, though mentioned before, I must beg leave once more to repeat it *PL*

6 The] *PL*; *par.* 62

8 often] 62; have often *PL* motive] 62; motives *PL*

11-12 in England and France] 62; with England and France it is different: *PL*

13-14 against each other] 62; *om.* *PL*

14 They have] 62; With such irreconcilable hatred have these two countries *PL*

16 have been] 62; were *PL*

20 arise] 62; result *PL*

¹ The English subscription for French prisoners, which, as the *Public Ledger* version indicates, Goldsmith had previously mentioned in Letter XI above.

² The *London Magazine* for January 1760 (xxix. 50) says that 'the perfidious French, as appears from some late accounts, treat many of their prisoners with the utmost inhumanity, adding insolence to the most intolerable cruelty'. For reports of particular instances of French cruelty see the *Gentleman's Magazine* for January 1760 (xxx. 43).

without cloaths to keep off the severity of the season. National benevolence prevailed over national animosity: Their prisoners were indeed enemies, but they were enemies in distress; they ceased to be hateful, when they no longer continued to be formidable: forgetting therefore their national hatred, the men who were brave 5 enough to conquer, were generous enough to forgive:¹ and they, whom all the world seemed to have disclaim'd, at last found pity and redress from those they attempted to subdue. A subscription was opened, ample charities collected, proper necessities procured, and the poor gay sons of a merry nation were once more taught to 10 resume their former gaiety.

When I cast my eye over the list of those who contributed on this occasion, I find the names almost entirely English, scarce one foreigner appears among the number. It was for Englishmen alone 15 to be capable of such exalted virtue. I own, I cannot look over this catalogue of good men and philosophers without thinking better of myself, because it makes me entertain a more favourable opinion of mankind: I am particularly struck with one who writes these words upon the paper that enclosed his benefaction. *The mite of an Englishman, a citizen of the world, to Frenchmen, prisoners of war, and 20 naked.*² I only wish that he may find as much pleasure from his virtues, as I have done in reflecting upon them, that alone will amply reward him. Such a one, my friend, is an honour to human nature; he makes no private distinctions of party; all that are stamp'd with the divine image of their creator are friends to him; he is a *native of the 25 world*; and the emperor of China may be proud that he has such a countryman.

² Their] 62; those poor PL

⁴ formidable:] 62; formidable, PL

⁵ hatred,] 62; hatred: PL

⁶ and they,] 62; thus those PL

⁹ collected] 62; were collected PL

procured] 62; were procured PL

¹⁵ this] 62; the PL

¹⁸ I] 62; but I PL

¹ Cf. the *Public Ledger* for 18 January 1760: 'Our present treatment of the French prisoners of war, notwithstanding the hard usage our people met with in France, is a proof that the well-bred part of our people do not naturally hate that nation, whatever our ancestors might have done. We now triumph over them in the virtues of humanity, as much as we have done many times in arms. . . .' See also the *London Magazine* for January 1760 (xxix. 50).

² This entry appears in the list of subscriptions for French prisoners in the *London Chronicle* for 17-19 January 1760 and in the *Public Advertiser* for 18 January. The 'mite' subscribed was ten guineas.

To rejoice at the destruction of our enemies, is a foible grafted upon human nature, and we must be permitted to indulge it: the true way of atoning for such an ill founded pleasure, is thus to turn our triumph into an act of benevolence, and to testify our own joy
5 by endeavouring to banish anxiety from others.

Hamti, the best and wisest emperor that ever filled the throne,¹ after having gained three signal victories over the Tartars, who had invaded his dominions, returned to Nankin in order to enjoy the glory of his conquest. After he had rested for some days, the people,
10 who are naturally fond of processions, impatiently expected the triumphal entry, which emperors upon such occasions were accustomed to make. Their murmurs came to the emperor's ear. He loved his people, and was willing to do all in his power to satisfy their just desires. He therefore assured them, that he intended, upon
15 the next feast of the Lanthorns,² to exhibit one of the most glorious triumphs that had ever been seen in China. The people were in raptures at his condescension; and, on the appointed day, assembled at the gates of the palace with the most eager expectations. Here they waited for some time without seeing any of those preparations
20 which usually precede a pageant. The lanthorn, with ten thousand tapers, was not yet brought forth; the fire-works, which usually covered the city walls, were not yet lighted; the people once more

2 indulge it] 62; give it vent PL

4 an act] 62; acts PL

6 Hamti] 62; Haneti PL

9 rested] 62; been returned PL

12 ear. He] 62; ear, who PL

14 them] 62; the people PL

16 The] PL; par. 62

¹ The name of Hamti (or Haneti) does not appear in the 'Annals of the Chinese Monarchs' in Du Halde, i. 130-236. The anecdote that follows may be Goldsmith's own elaboration of the following sentence in the *Bee*, No. V, which he had translated from the *Encyclopédie*: 'The same proposal [that in all events which cause a public joy, we make our exultations conspicuous only by acts useful to society] was long before confirmed by a Chinese emperor, who lived in the last century, who, upon an occasion of extraordinary joy, forbade his subjects to make the usual illuminations, either with a design of sparing their substance, or of turning them to some more durable indications of joy, more glorious for him, and more advantageous to his people' (above, I, p. 438).

² See Le Comte, i. 274: 'Le quinzième jour du premier mois est encore plus celebre. On le nomme le jour, ou la feste des *Lanternes*, parce qu'on en suspend dans les maisons & dans les rues en si grand nombre, que c'est une espece de fureur plutôt qu'une feste. On en allume peut-estre plus de deux millions ce jour-là.' For a more detailed account see Du Halde, i. 290 (misnumbered 292).

began to murmur at this delay; when, in the midst of their impatience, the palace gates flew open, and the emperor himself appeared not in splendour or magnificence, but in an ordinary habit, followed by the blind, the maimed, and the strangers of the city, all in new cloaths, and each carrying in his hand money enough to supply his necessities for the year. The people were at first amazed, but soon perceived the wisdom of their king, who taught them, that to make one man happy was more truly great than having ten thousand captives groaning at the wheels of his chariot. Adieu.

LETTER XXIV.¹

10

[The venders of quack medicines and nostrums, ridiculed.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

Whatever may be the merits of the English in other sciences, they seem peculiarly excellent in the art of healing. There is scarcely a disorder incident to humanity, against which they are not possessed with a most infallible antidote. The professors of other arts confess the inevitable intricacy of things; talk with doubt, and decide with hesitation; but doubting is entirely unknown in medicine; the advertising professors here delight in cases of difficulty; be the disorder never so desperate or radical, you will find numbers in every street, who, by levelling a pill at the part affected,²

1 delay] 62; unexpected delay PL

3 not in splendour or magnificence, but] 62; om. PL

4 the blind] 62; all the blind PL all] 62; om. PL

6 year] 62; year ensuing PL

7 perceived] 62; they perceived PL

7-8 to make one man] 62; one man made PL

8 having] 62; om. PL

14 ff. The first two paragraphs of this letter appear in 65 and 66 as the first two paragraphs of Essay XX.

16 they] PL, 62; our advertising doctors 65, 66

20-21 the advertising . . . of difficulty;] 62-66; om. PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Thursday, 27 March 1760.

² Dobson compares *Tom Jones*, bk. viii, chap. ix: 'This [interest] is indeed a most excellent medicine, and, like Ward's pill, flies at once to the particular part of the body on which you desire to operate, . . . where it scarce ever fails of immediately producing the desired effect.'

promise a certain cure without loss of time,¹ knowledge of a bed-fellow, or hinderance of business.

When I consider the assiduity of this profession, their benevolence amazes me. They not only in general give their medicines for
 5 half value,² but use the most persuasive remonstrances to induce the sick to come and be cured. Sure there must be something strangely obstinate in an English patient, who refuses so much health upon such easy terms; does he take a pride in being bloated with a
 10 dropsy? Does he find pleasure in the alternations of an intermittent fever? Or feel as much satisfaction in nursing up his gout, as he found pleasure in acquiring it? He must, otherwise he would never reject such repeated assurances of instant relief. What can be more convincing than the manner in which the sick are invited to be well. The doctor first begs the most earnest attention of the public to
 15 what he is going to propose; he solemnly affirms the pill was never found to want success; he produces a list of those who have been rescued from the grave by taking it.³ Yet, notwithstanding all this, there are many here who now and then think proper to be sick; only sick did I say? There are some who even think proper to die! Yes,
 20 by the head of Confucius they die; though they might have purchas'd the health restoring specific for half a crown at every corner.

1-2 knowledge of a bedfellow,] 62-66; *om. PL*

3 this profession] 62-66; the physicians here *PL*

8 bloated] 62-66; swollen up *PL*

11 must, otherwise] 62-66; certainly must, or *PL*

14 most] 62-66; *om. PL*

¹ Cf. the *Daily Advertiser* for 5 March 1760: 'T. FRANKS, M.D. at the Acorn in the Old Bailey, of 34 Years Practice in Venereal Cases, wherein he never once fail'd of a perfect Cure. If fresh contracted in a few Days, and if of long Standing without Loss of Time. . . .'

² An advertisement for 'the Miraculous Drops' in *ibid.* for 30 June 1759 says: '... through Pity for the Poor, I consent to have them distributed among them at 4s. 6d. the two Bottles.' 'An Electuary which will perfectly cure the Venereal Disorder' is thus advertised in the same number: 'This Medicine is sold so cheap, on Account of the great Number of Patients that are daily neglecting themselves for Want of Money, &c. and so become Objects of Pity.'

³ Cf., for example, an advertisement in *ibid.* for 26 July 1759: 'Just cured, Capt. Coffing, of the Two Sisters, in the New England Trade, by the Medicinal Snuff, who was so ill, as one of our most worthy and approv'd Doctors thought it absolutely necessary to bleed, blister, and purge. . . . It was then proposed sending for some of the Patent Medicinal Snuff. The Gentleman, Doctor, and an experienced Apothecary, said they believed it would be of little or no Service, but that was over ruled, and one Paper was sent for, and half taken, which had its desired Effect, and the Remainder performed the Cure.'

I'm amazed, my dear Fum Hoam, that these doctors who know what an obstinate set of people they have to deal with, have never thought of attempting to revive the dead. When the living are found to reject their prescriptions, they ought in conscience to apply to the dead, from whom they can expect no such mortifying repulses; they would find in the dead the most complying patients imaginable; and what gratitude might they not expect from the patient's son, now no longer an heir, and his wife, now no longer a widow. Think not, my friend, that there is any thing chimerical in such an attempt; they already perform cures equally strange: what can be more truly astonishing than to see old age restored to youth, and vigour to the most feeble constitutions;¹ yet this is performed here every day; a simple electuary effects these wonders, even without the bungling ceremonies of having the patient boiled up in a kettle, or ground down in a mill.

Few physicians here go through the ordinary courses of education, but receive all their knowledge of medicine by immediate inspiration from heaven. Some are thus inspired even in the womb; and what is very remarkable, understand their profession as well at three years old as at threescore. Others have spent a great part of their lives unconscious of any latent excellence, till a bankruptcy, or a residence in gaol have called their miraculous powers into exertion. And others still there are indebted to their superlative ignorance alone for success. The more ignorant the practitioner, the less capable is he thought of deceiving. The people here judge as they do in the east; where it is thought absolutely requisite that a man should be an ideot before he pretend to be either a conjuror or a doctor.

1 I'm] *PL*; I am *62*

3 When] *62*; As *PL* found] *62*; sometimes found *PL*

4-5 they ought . . . from whom] *62*; *om. PL*

5 can] *62*; could *PL* repulses] *62*; repulses from those I refer to *PL*

7-8 son, now . . . and his] *62*; *om. PL*

8 Think] *PL*; *par. 62*

10 what] *62*; for what *PL*

14 boiled] *62*; either boiled *PL*

19 understand] *62*; are found to understand *PL*

21 bankruptcy] *62*; statute of bankruptcy *PL*

25-26 the east . . . is thought] *62*; several countries of the east; who hold it *PL*

27 pretend] *62*; can pretend *PL* conjuror] *62*; dervise *PL*

¹ See, for example, the advertisement of 'The Royal Restorative' in *ibid.* for 30 January 1760: 'This noblest of all Cordials and Aphrodisiacs not only restores a juvenile Bloom, Health, and Vigour to the Individual, but also strongly propels and equally empowers to an Increase of the Species.'

When a physician by inspiration is sent for, he never perplexes the patient by previous examination; he asks very few questions, and those only for form sake. He knows every disorder by intuition. He administers the pill or drop for every distemper; nor is more inquisitive than the farrier while he drenches an horse.¹ If the patient lives, then has he one more to add to the surviving list; if he dies, then it may be justly said of the patient's disorder, *that as it was not cured, the disorder was incurable.*

LETTER XXV.²

10 [The natural rise and decline of kingdoms, exemplified in the history of the kingdom of Lao.]

*From Lien Chi Altangi to ***** merchant in Amsterdam.*

I WAS some days ago in company with a politician, who very pathetically declaimed upon the miserable situation of his
 15 country: he assured me, that the whole political machine was moving in a wrong track, and that scarce even abilities like his own could ever set it right again. "What have we, said he, to do with the wars on the continent; we are a commercial nation; we have only to cultivate commerce like our neighbours the Dutch; it is our business
 20 to encrease trade by settling new colonies: riches are the strength of a nation; and, for the rest, our ships, our ships alone will protect us." I found it vain to oppose my feeble arguments to those of a man who thought himself wise enough to direct even the ministry: I fancied, however, that I saw with more certainty, because I
 25 reasoned without prejudice: I therefore begged leave, instead of argument, to relate a short history. He gave me a smile at once of condescension and contempt, and I proceeded as follows to describe,
 THE RISE AND DECLENSION OF THE KINGDOM OF LAO.³

3 sake. He] 62; sake; as he PL

4 nor is] 62; being otherwise no PL

7 said of . . . that as] 62; said, because PL

¹ Cf. Goldsmith's letter to Contarine, c. December 1753, written from Edinburgh, where he was studying medicine: 'A quack, unable to distinguish the particularities in each disease, prescribes at a venture: if he finds such a disorder may be called by the general name of fever for instance, he has a set of remedies which he applies to cure it, nor does he desist till his medicines are run out, or the patient has lost his life' (*Collected Letters*, pp. 15-16).

² In the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 1 April 1760.

³ This kingdom and its history seem to be Goldsmith's invention, but the name may

Northward of China, and in one of the doublings of the great wall, the fruitful province of Lao enjoyed its liberty and a peculiar government of its own. As the inhabitants were on all sides surrounded by the wall, they feared no sudden invasion from the Tartars; and being each possessed of property, they were zealous 5 in its defence.

The natural consequences of security and affluence in any country is a love of pleasure; when the wants of nature are supplied, we seek after the conveniencies; when possessed of these, we desire the luxuries of life; and when every luxury is provided, it is then ambition takes up the man, and leaves him still something to wish for: 10 the inhabitants of the country from primitive simplicity soon began to aim at elegance, and from elegance proceeded to refinement. It was now found absolutely requisite, for the good of the state, that the people should be divided: formerly the same hand that was 15 employed in tilling the ground, or in dressing up the manufactures, was also in time of need a soldier; but the custom was now changed; for it was perceived, that a man bred up from childhood to the arts either of peace or of war, became more eminent by this means in his respective profession. The inhabitants were therefore now distin- 20 guished into artizans and soldiers; and while those improved the luxuries of life, these watched for the security of the people.

A country possessed of freedom has always two sorts of enemies to fear: foreign foes who attack its existence from without, and internal miscreants who betray its liberties within. The inhabitants 25 of Lao were to guard against both. A country of artizans were most likely to preserve internal liberty; and a nation of soldiers were fittest to repel a foreign invasion. Hence naturally arose a division of opinion between the artizans and the soldiers of the kingdom. The artizans ever complaining, that freedom was threatened by an armed 30 internal force, were for disbanding the soldiers, and insisted that their walls, their walls alone were sufficient to repel the most formidable invasion: the warriors, on the contrary, represented the power of the neighbouring kings, the combinations formed against their state, and the weakness of the wall which every earthquake 35 might overturn. While this altercation continued, the kingdom might be justly said to enjoy its greatest share of vigour: every order in

25 within] 62; from within *PL*

have been suggested by 'the Kingdom of *Lyau*, which stood for the Space of two hundred and nine Years' (Du Halde, i. 210-11).

the state, by being watchful over each other, contributed to diffuse happiness equally, and balance the state. The arts of peace flourished, nor were those of war neglected; the neighbouring powers, who had nothing to apprehend from the ambition of men whom they only saw
 5 solicitous not for riches but freedom, were contented to traffick with them: they sent their goods to be manufactured in Lao, and paid a large price for them upon their return.

By these means this people at length became moderately rich, and their opulence naturally invited the invader: a Tartar prince led an
 10 immense army against them, and they as bravely stood up in their own defence; they were still inspired with a love of their country; they fought the barbarous enemy with fortitude, and gained a complete victory.

From this moment, which they regarded as the completion of their
 15 glory, historians date their down fall. They had risen into strength by a love of their country, and fell by indulging ambition. The country possessed by the invading Tartars, seemed to them a prize that would not only render them more formidable for the future, but which would encrease their opulence for the present; it was unani-
 20 mously resolved, therefore, both by soldiers and artizans, that those desolate regions should be peopled by colonies from Lao. When a trading nation begins to act the conqueror, it is then perfectly undone: it subsists in some measure by the support of its neigh-
 25 bours; while they continue to regard it without envy or apprehension, trade may flourish; but when once it presumes to assert as its right what it only enjoyed as a favour: each country reclaims that part of commerce which it has power to take back, and turns it into some other channel more honourable, though perhaps less convenient.

Every neighbour now began to regard with jealous eyes this
 30 ambitious commonwealth, and forbade their subjects any future intercourse with them. The inhabitants of Lao, however, still pursued the same ambitious maxims; it was from their colonies alone they expected riches; and riches, said they, are strength, and strength is security. Numberless were the migrations of the desperate and
 35 enterprizing of this country to people the desolate dominions lately possessed by the Tartar; between these colonies and the mother

2 balance] *PL*; ballanced 62

5 for] 62; of *PL*

7 their] 62; the *PL*

15 into] *PL*; in 62

19 which] 62; *om. PL*

country, a very advantageous traffic was at first carried on, the republic sent their colonies large quantities of the manufactures of the country, and they in return provided the republic with an equivalent in ivory and ginseng.¹ By this means the inhabitants became immensely rich, and this produced an equal degree of voluptuousness; for men who have much money will always find some fantastical modes of enjoyment. How shall I mark the steps by which they declined! Every colony in process of time spreads over the whole country where it first was planted. As it grows more populous, it becomes more polite; and those manufactures for which it was in the beginning obliged to others, it learns to dress up itself, such was the case with the colonies of Lao; they in less than a century became a powerful and a polite people, and the more polite they grew, the less advantageous was the commerce which still subsisted between them and others.² By this means the mother country being abridged in its commerce, grew poorer but not less luxurious. Their former wealth had introduced luxury; and wherever luxury once fixes, no art can either lessen or remove it. Their commerce with their neighbours was totally destroyed; and that with their colonies was every day naturally and necessarily declining; they still, however, preserved the insolence of wealth, without a power to support it, and persevered in being luxurious while contemptible from poverty. In short, the state resembled one of those bodies bloated with disease, whose bulk is only a symptom of its wretchedness. Their former opulence only rendered them more impotent, as those individuals who are reduced from riches to poverty, are of all men the most unfortunate and helpless. They had imagined, because their colonies tended to make them rich upon the first acquisition,

9 it first] 62; first it *PL*

15 between them and others] 62; *om. PL* being] 62; *om. PL*

17 wherever luxury] 62; that wherever it *PL*

18 it] 62; *om. PL* Their] 62; However, it is then only dangerous in a state, when the inhabitants are possessed of the will, but not the power of being luxurious: This was the case with those I refer to. They were actually poor with all the appearance of affluence, though their *PL*

21 preserved] 62; were extravagant and vain, preserving *PL*

21-22 without a power . . . being luxurious] 62; *om. PL*

25-27 Their former . . . and helpless.] 62; *om. PL*

¹ There is an extended account 'Of JIN SENG, a Plant of the first Rank in the Chinese Physic', in Du Halde, ii. 215-21.

² Cf. Goldsmith's remarks on colonies in Letter XVII above.

they would still continue to do so; they now found however, that on themselves alone they should have depended for support; that colonies ever afford but temporary affluence, and when cultivated and polite are no longer useful. From such a concurrence of circumstances they soon became contemptible. The emperor Honti invaded them with a powerful army. Historians do not say whether their colonies were too remote to lend assistance, or else were desirous of shaking off their dependance: But certain it is, they scarce made any resistance; their walls were now found but a weak defence; and they at length were obliged to acknowledge subjection to the empire of China. Happy, very happy might they have been, had they known when to bound their riches and their glory. Had they known that extending empire is often diminishing power, that countries are ever strongest which are internally powerful; that colonies by draining away the brave and enterprizing, leave the country in the hands of the timid and the avaricious; that walls give little protection, unless manned with resolution; that too much commerce may injure a nation as well as too little; and that there is a wide difference between a conquering and a flourishing empire. Adieu.

20

LETTER XXVI.¹

[The character of the man in black; with some instances of his inconsistent conduct.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

25 **T**HO' fond of many acquaintances, I desire an intimacy only with a few. The man in black whom I have often mentioned, is one whose friendship I cou'd wish to acquire, because he possesses

1 however] 62; *om. PL*

2-3 that colonies] 62; and that colonies *PL*

3-4 affluence, and . . . longer useful] 62; affluence *PL*

5-6 The emperor . . . powerful army.] 62; *om. PL*

8 is,] 62; is, that the emperor Ham-Ti invaded them with a powerful army; *PL*

10 at length were] 62; were at length *PL*

11 Happy] *PL*; *par. 62*

13 countries are] 62; that country is *PL*

14 which are] 62; which is *PL*

15 enterprizing] 62; the enterprizing *PL*

25 fond] 62; I am fond *PL*

26 a few] 62; few *PL*

27 one] 62; one of those *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Thursday, 3 April 1760.

my esteem. His manners, it is true, are tinctured with some strange inconsistencies; and he may be justly termed an humourist in a nation of humourists. Tho' he is generous even to profusion, he affects to be thought a prodigy of parsimony and prudence; though his conversation be replete with the most sordid and selfish maxims,¹ 5 his heart is dilated with the most unbounded love. I have known him profess himself a man hater, while his cheek was glowing with compassion; and while his looks were softened into pity, I have heard him use the language of the most unbounded ill nature. Some affect humanity and tenderness; others boast of having such dispositions from nature; but he is the only man I ever knew who seemed ashamed of his natural benevolence. He takes as much pains to hide his feelings as an hypocrite would to conceal his indifference;² but on every unguarded moment the mask drops off, and reveals him to the most superficial observer. 15

In one of our late excursions into the country, happening to discourse upon the provision that was made for the poor in England, he seemed amazed how any of his countrymen could be so foolishly weak as to relieve occasional objects of charity, when the laws had made such ample provision for their support. In every parish house, 20 says he, the poor are supplied with food, cloaths, fire, and a bed to lie on; they want no more, I desire no more my self; yet still they seem discontented. I'm surprized at the inactivity of our magistrates, in not taking up such vagrants who are only a weight upon the industrious; I'm surprized that the people are found to relieve them, when 25 they must be at the same time sensible that it, in some measure,

6 love] 62; love to his fellow creatures *PL* known] 62; heard *PL*

9 affect] 62; may affect *PL*

10 boast of having] 62; may boast that they have *PL*

13 an] *PL*; any 62

17 poor in England] 62; English poor *PL*

22 my self] 62; *om. PL*

25 the people] 62; people *PL*

¹ Cf. Goldsmith's letter of 15 August 1758 to Mrs. Jane Lawder, in which he proposes to reform his finances and to adorn his room 'with maxims of frugality', of which he gives examples (*Collected Letters*, pp. 44-45).

² In the same letter Goldsmith writes of himself: 'Those who know me at all, know that I have always been actuated by different principles from the rest of Mankind, and while none regarded the interests of his friends more, no man on earth regarded his own less. I have often affected bluntness to avoid the imputation of flattery, have frequently seem'd to overlook those merits too obvious to escape notice, and pretended disregard to those instances of good nature and good sense which I could not fail tacitly to applaud . . .' (*ibid.*, pp. 43-44).

encourages idleness, extravagance, and imposture. Were I to advise any man for whom I had the least regard, I would caution him by all means not to be imposed upon by their false pretences: let me assure you, Sir, they are impostors, every one of them; and rather
5 merit a prison than relief.

He was proceeding in this strain earnestly, to dissuade me from an imprudence of which I am seldom guilty; when an old man who still had about him the remnants of tattered finery, implored our compassion. He assured us that he was no common beggar, but
10 forced into the shameful profession, to support a dying wife and five hungry children. Being prepossessed against such falshoods, his story had not the least influence upon me; but it was quite otherwise with the man in black; I could see it visibly operate upon his countenance, and effectually interrupt his harangue. I could easily perceive that
15 his heart burned to relieve the five starving children, but he seemed ashamed to discover his weakness to me. While he thus hesitated between compassion and pride, I pretended to look another way, and he seized this opportunity of giving the poor petitioner a piece of silver bidding him at the same time, in order that I should hear,
20 go work for his bread, and not teize passengers with such impertinent falsehoods for the future.

As he had fancied himself quite unperceived, he continued, as we proceeded, to rail against beggars with as much animosity as before; he threw in some episodes on his own amazing prudence and
25 œconomy, with his profound skill in discovering impostors;¹ he explained the manner in which he would deal with beggars were he a magistrate, hinted at enlarging some of the prisons for their reception, and told two stories of ladies that were robbed by beggar men. He was beginning a third to the same purpose, when a sailor with
30 a wooden leg once more crossed our walks, desiring our pity, and

6 from] 62; against *PL*

10 to support] 62; in order to support *PL*

11 Being] 62; As I was *PL*

14 and effectually interrupt] 62; while it effectually interrupted *PL*

21 for the future] 62; *om. PL*

22 had] 62; *om. PL*

¹ In a letter to his brother Henry of c. 13 January 1759 Goldsmith says of himself: 'I have passed my days among a number of cool designing beings and have contracted all their suspicious manner, in my own behaviour' (*Collected Letters*, p. 58). But the Percy Memoir thus annotates this sentence: 'This is all *gratis dictum*, for there never was a character so unsuspecting and so unguarded as the writer's' (p. 54).

blessing our limbs. I was for going on without taking any notice, but
 my friend looking wishfully upon the poor petitioner, bid me stop,
 and he would shew me with how much ease he could at any time
 detect an impostor. He now therefore assumed a look of importance,
 and in an angry tone began to examine the sailor, demanding in 5
 what engagement he was thus disabled and rendered unfit for ser-
 vice. The sailor replied in a tone as angrily as he, that he had been an
 officer on board a private ship of war, and that he had lost his leg
 abroad in defence of those who did nothing at home. At this reply,
 all my friend's importance vanished in a moment; he had not a 10
 single question more to ask; he now only studied what method he
 should take to relieve him unobserved. He had however no easy part
 to act, as he was obliged to preserve the appearance of ill nature
 before me, and yet relieve himself by relieving the sailor. Casting
 therefore a furious look upon some bundles of chips which the 15
 fellow carried in a string at his back, my friend demanded how he
 sold his matches; but not waiting for a reply, desired, in a surly tone,
 to have a shilling's worth. The sailor seemed at first surprised at his
 demand, but soon recollecting himself, and presenting his whole
 bundle, Here, master, says he, take all my cargo, and a blessing into 20
 the bargain.

It is impossible to describe with what an air of triumph my friend
 marched off with his new purchase, he assured me, that he was firmly
 of opinion that those fellows must have stolen their goods, who
 could thus afford to sell them for half value; he informed me of 25
 several different uses to which those chips might be applied, he
 expatiated largely upon the savings that would result from lighting
 candles with a match instead of thrusting them into the fire. He
 averred, that he would as soon have parted with a tooth as his money
 to those vagabonds, unless for some valuable consideration. I cannot 30
 tell how long this panegyric upon frugality and matches might have
 continued, had not his attention been called off by another object
 more distressful than either of the former. A woman in rags, with
 one child in her arms, and another on her back, was attempting to
 sing ballads, but with such a mournful voice that it was difficult to 35

4 He] *PL*; *par.* 62

9 did nothing] 62; staid *PL*

23 off] 62; forward *PL* that he] 62; he *PL*

34 on] 62; at *PL*

35 ballads] 62; *om.* *PL* mournful] 62; *om.* *PL*

determine whether she was singing or crying. A wretch, who, in the deepest distress still aimed at good humour, was an object my friend was by no means capable of withstanding, his vivacity, and his discourse were instantly interrupted, upon this occasion his very
 5 dissimulation had forsaken him. Even, in my presence, he immediately applied his hands to his pockets, in order to relieve her, but guess his confusion, when he found he had already given away all the money he carried about him to former objects. The misery painted in the woman's visage, was not half so strongly expressed
 10 as the agony in his. He continued to search for some time, but to no purpose, 'till, at length, recollecting himself, with a face of ineffable good nature, as he had no money, he put into her hands his shilling's worth of matches.

LETTER XXVII.¹

15

[The history of the man in black.²]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

AS there appeared something reluctantly good in the character of my companion, I must own it surprized me what could be his
 20 motives for thus concealing virtues which others take such pains to display. I was unable to repress my desire of knowing the history of a man who thus seemed to act under continual restraint, and whose benevolence was rather the effect of appetite than reason. It

8 carried] 62; had carried *PL*

10 his] 62; the countenance of my friend *PL*

13 matches.] 62; matches. Adieu. *PL*

19 it surprized me] 62; I was surpriz'd at *PL*

19-20 his motives for] 62; the motives for his *PL*

23 appetite than] 62; nature than of *PL* It] *PL*; *par.* 62

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Wednesday, 9 April 1760.

² Mrs. Hodson, Goldsmith's sister, makes the following statement in her narrative of his life: 'I now must request the reader will read himself in the Character of the Man in Black in the Citizen of the world he there gives an account of his Father's Death which I w^d wish to omit & many other incidents of his life as I am certain that Character is his own' (*Collected Letters*, pp. 169-70). Percy in his Memoir took this statement to mean that the Man in Black represented Goldsmith's father, and he has been followed in this identification by subsequent biographers and editors. But, as Miss Balderston has pointed out (*ibid.*, p. x), Mrs. Hodson apparently wished to identify the Man in Black with Goldsmith himself, and the history of the Man in Black does bear important resemblances to Goldsmith's early life.

was not however till after repeated solicitations he thought proper to gratify my curiosity.

"If you are fond, says he, of hearing *hair breadth 'scapes*, my history must certainly please; for I have been for 20 years upon the very verge of starving, without ever being starved. My father, the younger son of a good family, was possessed of a small living in the church. His education was above his fortune,¹ and his generosity greater than his education. Poor as he was, he had his flatterers still poorer than himself; for every dinner he gave them, they returned him an equivalent in praise; and this was all he wanted; the same ambition that actuates a monarch at the head of an army, influenced my father at the head of his table: he told the story of the ivy-tree, and that was laugh'd at; he repeated the jest of the two scholars and one pair of breeches, and the company laughed at that; but the story of Taffy in the sedan chair² was sure to set the table in a roar; thus his pleasure encreased, in proportion to the pleasure he gave; he loved all the world, and he fancied all the world loved him.

¹ however] 62; *om. PL*

² curiosity] 62; curiosity; and in the following account as nearly as I can remember, you have

THE HISTORY OF THE MAN IN BLACK *PL*

³ "If] *PL*; *no par. 62* fond, says he, of hearing] 62; fond of hearing of *PL* 'scapes] 62; 'scapes, said he *PL*

⁵ My] *PL*; *par. 62*

⁹ poorer than himself;] 62; poorer; who, *PL* they] 62; *om. PL*

¹⁰ and] 62; *om. PL*

¹¹ ambition] 62; ambition for glory *PL*

¹⁴ the company] 62; they *PL*

¹⁶ the pleasure] 62; that *PL*

¹⁷ he fancied . . . world loved] 62; all the world pretended to love *PL*

¹ Cf. Goldsmith's account of his father in the Memorandum dictated to Percy in 1773: 'His, the Doctor's, Father, the Revd. Charles Goldsmith, was a native of the County of Durham, but educated at Dublin College: he got a small Living in England, & afterwds. a good Benefice in Ireland: being rector of Kilkenny West' (Katharine C. Balderston, *The History & Sources of Percy's Memoir of Goldsmith* [Cambridge, 1926], p. 13).

² Probably the story in *The Irish Miscellany, or Teagueland Jest* (2nd ed., 1747), p. 41: 'Perhaps it might be the same *Teaguelander* who (fearing that a Shower that fell might spoil his gay Trappings) called for a Chair; but the arch Chairmen, knowing his Quality, plac'd him in a Chair without a Bottom: and so, between leading and driving, he was fain to pass thro' all the Dirt in the Streets, until he came to his Lodging . . . : But coming into the House, new Shoon, and Stockings in a nasty Pickle; *Bee Shaint Patrick*, said he, *and bee all de Ghostly Faathers, I tinke de English bee very mush unkind to himselfe, to bee carry'd in a Chair a-Foot, when dey may ride in de Dart an Horsh-back.*'

"As his fortune was but small, he lived up to the very extent of it; he had no intentions of leaving his children money, for that was dross; he was resolved they should have learning; for learning he used to observe, was better than silver or gold. For this purpose he undertook to instruct us himself; and took as much pains to form our morals, as to improve our understanding. We were told that universal benevolence was what first cemented society; we were taught to consider all the wants of mankind as our own; to regard the *human face divine* with affection and esteem; he wound us up to be mere machines of pity, and rendered us incapable of withstanding the slightest impulse made either by real or fictitious distress; in a word, we were perfectly instructed in the art of *giving away* thousands, before we were taught the more necessary qualifications of *getting* a farthing.¹

"I can't avoid imagining, that, thus refined by his lessons out of all my suspicion, and divested of even all the little cunning which nature had given me, I resembled, upon my first entrance into the busy and insidious world, one of those gladiators who were exposed without armour in the amphitheatre at Rome. My father, however, who had only seen the world on one side, seemed to triumph in my superior discernment; though my whole stock of wisdom consisted in being able to talk like himself upon subjects that once were useful, because they were then topics of the busy world; but that now were utterly useless, because connected with the busy world no longer.

"The first opportunity he had of finding his expectations dis-

3 he was] 62; but he was *PL* have learning] 62; have more than an equivalent in learning *PL*

5 us] 62; his children *PL* to form] 62; in forming *PL*

6 to improve] 62; improving *PL*

7 what first cemented society] 62; the first law of nature *PL*

9 up] 62; up in short *PL*

10 and rendered us] 62; *om. PL*

11 made] 62; made upon us, *PL*

12 in a word,] 62; and *PL* instructed] 62; versed *PL* *giving away*] 62;

no italics PL

14 a farthing] 62; six-pence *PL*

15 can't] *PL*; cannot 62

16 suspicion, and] 62; suspicion and prudence, *PL* even all] 62; even *PL*

18 one of] 62; *om. PL*

19 at Rome] 62; to combat wild beasts *PL*

21 though] 62; *om. PL* consisted] 62; consisting *PL*

23 then] 62; the *PL*

24 useless] 62; unserviceable *PL*

¹ Cf. Goldsmith's letter to his brother, c. 13 January 1759 (*Collected Letters*, p. 61).

appointed, was at the very middling figure I made in the university: he had flattered himself that he should soon see me rising into the foremost rank in literary reputation, but was mortified to find me utterly unnoticed and unknown. His disappointment might have been partly ascribed to his having over-rated my talents, and partly 5 to my dislike of mathematical reasonings¹ at a time, when my imagination and memory yet unsatisfied, were more eager after new objects, than desirous of reasoning upon those I knew. This did not, however, please my tutors, who observed, indeed, that I was a little dull; but at the same time allowed, that I seemed to be *very* 10 *good natured*, and had no harm in me.

"After I had resided at college seven years my father died, and left me—his blessing.² Thus shoved from shore without ill nature to protect, or cunning to guide, or proper stores to subsist me in so dangerous a voyage, I was obliged to embark in the wide world at 15 twenty-two. But, in order to settle in life, my friends *advised* (for they always advise when they begin to despise us) they advised me, I say, to go into orders.³ To be obliged to wear a long whig, when

5 over-rated] 62; too highly rated *PL*

6 at a time] 62; *om. PL*

7-8 yet unsatisfied . . . than desirous] 62; were yet unsatisfied. Curiosity after new objects was greater than my desire *PL*

10-11 seemed to . . . in me] 62; had no harm in me, and seemed to be *very good natured PL*

12 at] 62; in *PL*

16 But, in] 62; In *PL* settle] 62; settle me *PL* *advised*] 62; *no italics PL*

18 To] *PL*; *par. 62*

¹ According to Prior, Goldsmith 'told Mr. Malone in London, when conversing about the University, that "though he made no great figure in mathematics, which was a study much in repute there, he could turn an ode of Horace into English better than any of them"' (*Life*, i. 92).

² There is some correspondence between this statement and Goldsmith's own account of himself in the Percy Memorandum of 1773: 'At 13 years of age he was entered at Dublin University. . . .

'After taking the Degree of A.B. he proceeded upon the Line of Physic and took the Degree of M.B. when he was about 20, he however ceased to reside after his degree of A.B.

'While he was an undergraduate his Father died & left his family in distressed Circumstances . . .' (*The History & Sources of Percy's Memoir*, p. 14).

³ According to Mrs. Hodson's narrative, after Goldsmith had finished college his uncle, the Rev. Thomas Contarine, 'w^d have him read for orders & w^d have given him Bread, but this he never liked for his inclination led him to Travail but Condescending to his Uncles desire he did read for Orders and waited on Bishop Sing at Elphin & answer^d Examination the Bishop asked his age which he told was twenty and his Lord Ship said he must wait till he was of a proper age . . .' (*Collected Letters*, p. 170).

- I liked a short one, or a black coat, when I generally dressed in brown, I thought was such a restraint upon my liberty, that I absolutely rejected the proposal. A priest in England, is not the same mortified creature with a bonze in China; with us, not he that fasts
 5 best, but eats best, is reckoned the best liver; yet I rejected a life of luxury, indolence, and ease, from no other consideration but that boyish one of dress.¹ So that my friends were now perfectly satisfied I was undone, and yet they thought it a pity for one who had not the least harm in him, and was so very good natured.
- 10 "Poverty naturally begets dependance, and I was admitted as flatterer to a great man.² At first I was surprised, that the situation of a flatterer at a great man's table could be thought disagreeable; there was no great trouble in listening attentively when his lordship spoke, and laughing when he looked round for applause. This even
 15 good manners might have obliged me to perform. I found, however, too soon, that his lordship was a greater dunce than myself; and from that very moment my power of flattery was at an end. I now rather aimed at setting him right, than at receiving his absurdities with submission: to flatter those we don't know is an easy task; but to flatter
 20 our intimate acquaintances, all whose foibles are strongly in our eye, is drudgery insupportable. Every time I now opened my lips in praise, my falshood went to my conscience, his lordship soon perceived me to be unfit for service; I was therefore discharged; my patron at the same time being graciously pleased to observe, that he believed
 25 I was tolerably good natured, and had not the least harm in me.

3 England] 62; England, my friend *PL*

4 a bonze] 62; one of your bonzes *PL*

5 reckoned] 62; called *PL* rejected] 62; at once rejected *PL*

7 dress] 62; dressing as I thought proper *PL* So that my] 62; My *PL*

8 I] 62; that I *PL*

9 so] 62; *om. PL*

17 my power . . . an end.] 62; I could flatter no longer; *PL* now] 62; *om. PL*

19 don't] *PL*; do not 62

20-21 acquaintances, all . . . our eye,] 62; acquaintances *PL*

22 my falshood] 62; it *PL*

23-24 at the same time being] 62; being at the same time *PL*

¹ According to the 'tradition in the diocese', when Goldsmith presented himself to Bishop Syngé for ordination, he appeared in scarlet breeches (Prior, *Life*, i. 110).

² Possibly an allusion to Goldsmith's experience while studying medicine at Edinburgh; cf. his letter to Contarine written from there c. December 1753: 'I have spent more than a fortnight every second day at the Duke of Hamilton's, but it seems they like me more as a *jester* than as a companion; so I disdain so servile an employment; 't was unworthy my calling as a physician' (*Collected Letters*, p. 17, and cf. p. 18).

“Disappointed in ambition I had recourse to love. A young lady who lived with her aunt, and was possessed of a pretty fortune in her own disposal, had given me, as I fancied, some reasons to expect success. The symptoms by which I was guided were striking, she had always laughed with me at her aukward acquaintance, and at her aunt among the number; she always observed, that a man of sense would make a better husband than a fool, and I as constantly applied the observation in my own favour. She continually talked in my company of friendship and the beauties of the mind, and spoke of Mr. Shrimp my rival’s high-heel’d shoes with detestation. These were circumstances which I thought strongly in my favour; so after resolving, and re-resolving, I had courage enough to tell her my mind. Miss heard my proposal with serenity, seeming at the same time to study the figures of her fan. Out at last it came. There was but one small objection to complete our happiness, which was no more, than—that she was married three months before to Mr. Shrimp with high-heel’d shoes. By way of consolation however she observed, that tho’ I was disappointed in her, my addresses to her aunt would probably kindle her into sensibility, as the old lady always allowed me to be very good-natured, and not to have the least share of harm in me.

“Yet still I had friends, numerous friends, and to them I was resolved to apply. O friendship! thou fond soother of the human breast, to thee we fly in every calamity; to thee the wretched seek for succour; on thee the care-tired son of misery fondly relies; from thy kind assistance the unfortunate always hopes relief, and may be ever sure of—disappointment! My first application was to a city scrivener, who had frequently offered to lend me money when he knew I did not want it. I informed him, that now was the time to put his friendship to the test; that I wanted to borrow a couple of hundreds for a certain occasion, and was resolved to take it up from him. And pray, Sir, cried my friend, do you want all this money? Indeed I never wanted it more, returned I. I am sorry for that, cries

4 striking] 62; these *PL*

5-6 at her aunt] 62; her aunt *PL*

7 as constantly] 62; *om. PL*

14 Out at last it came.] 62; *om. PL*

16 than—] 62; than *PL*

17 high-heel’d] 62; the high-heel’d *PL*

19 kindle her into sensibility] 62; find her not insensible *PL*

22-16 (p. 118) Yet still . . . you know.] 62; *om. PL*

the scrivener, with all my heart; for they who want money when they come to borrow, will always want money when they should come to pay.

“From him I flew with indignation to one of the best friends I
 5 had in the world, and made the same request. Indeed, Mr. Dry-bone, cries my friend, I always thought it would come to this. You know, sir, I would not advise you but for your own good; but your conduct has hitherto been ridiculous in the highest degree, and some of your acquaintance always thought you a very silly fellow; let me see, you
 10 want two hundred pounds; do you want only two hundred, sir, exactly? To confess a truth, returned I, I shall want three hundred; but then I have another friend from whom I can borrow the rest. Why then, replied my friend, if you would take my advice; and you know I should not presume to advise you but for your own good, I
 15 would recommend it to you to borrow the whole sum from that other friend; and then one note will serve for all, you know.¹

“Poverty now began to come fast upon me, yet instead of growing more provident or cautious as I grew poor, I became every day more indolent and simple. A friend was arrested for fifty pounds, I was
 20 unable to extricate him except by becoming his bail. When at liberty he fled from his creditors, and left me to take his place. In prison I expected greater satisfactions than I had enjoyed at large. I hoped to converse with men in this new world simple and believing like myself, but I found them as cunning and as cautious as those in the
 25 world I had left behind. They spunged up my money whilst it lasted, borrowed my coals and never paid them, and cheated me when I play’d at cribbage. All this was done because they believed me to be very good-natured, and knew that I had no harm in me.

“Upon my first entrance into this mansion, which is to some the
 30 abode of despair, I felt no sensations different from those I experienced abroad. I was now on one side the door, and those who were unconfined were on the other; this was all the difference between us. At first indeed I felt some uneasiness, in considering how I should be able to provide this week for the wants of the week ensuing; but
 35 after some time, if I found myself sure of eating one day, I never

22 large.] 62; large, *PL*

24 as cautious] 62; cautious *PL*

31 the door] 62; of the door *PL*

¹ This paragraph and the one preceding are largely derived from the paper ‘On the Use of Language’ in the *Bee*, No. III (above, I, pp. 397–8).

troubled my head how I was to be supplied another. I seized every precarious meal with the utmost good humour, indulged no rants of spleen at my situation, never called down heaven and all the stars to behold me dining upon an halfpenny-worth of radishes; my very companions were taught to believe that I liked sallad better than 5 mutton.¹ I contented myself with thinking, that all my life I should either eat white bread or brown; considered that all that happened was best, laughed when I was not in pain, took the world as it went, and read Tacitus often, for want of more books and company.

"How long I might have continued in this torpid state of simplicity I cannot tell, had I not been roused by seeing an old acquaintance, whom I knew to be a prudent blockhead preferred to a place in the government. I now found that I had pursued a wrong track, and that the true way of being able to relieve others, was first to aim at independance myself. My immediate care, therefore, was to leave 15 my present habitation, and make an entire reformation in my conduct and behaviour. For a free, open, undesigning deportment, I put on that of closeness, prudence, and œconomy. One of the most heroic actions I ever performed, and for which I shall praise myself as long as I live, was the refusing half a crown to an old acquaintance, 20 at the time when he wanted it, and I had it to spare; for this alone I deserve to be decreed an ovation. I now therefore pursued a course of uninterrupted frugality, seldom wanted a dinner, and was consequently invited to twenty. I soon began to get the character of a saving hunks² that had money; and insensibly grew into esteem. 25 Neighbours have asked my advice in the disposal of their daughters, and I have always taken care not to give any. I have contracted a friendship with an alderman, only by observing, that if we take a

5 sallad] 62; the sallad *PL*

7 considered] 62; I considered *PL*

8 laughed] 62; I laughed *PL*

9 company] 62; better company *PL*

21-22 spare; for . . . an ovation] 62; spare *PL*

22 I now] *PL*; *par.* 62 therefore] 62; *om.* *PL*

25 insensibly] 62; I insensibly *PL*

¹ Cf. 'On the Use of Language' in the *Bee*: 'If then you would ward off the gripe of poverty, pretend to be a stranger to her, and she will at least use you with ceremony. . . . If you be caught dining upon a halfpenny porrenger of pease soup and potatoes, praise the wholesomeness of your frugal repast' (above, I, p. 400).

² Cf. Goldsmith's letter to Mrs. Jane Lawder, 15 August 1758: 'However it is probable you may one of those days see me turn'd into a perfect Hunks and as dark and intricate as a mouse-hole. I have already given my Lanlady orders for an entire reform in the state of my finances . . .' (*Collected Letters*, p. 44).

farthing from a thousand pound it will be a thousand pound no longer.¹ I have been invited to a pawnbroker's table, by pretending to hate gravy;² and am now actually upon treaty of marriage with a rich widow for only having observed that the bread was rising. If
 5 ever I am ask'd a question, whether I know it or not, instead of answering, I only smile and look wise. If a charity is proposed, I go about with the hat, but put nothing in myself. If a wretch solicits my pity, I observe that the world is filled with impostors, and take a certain method of not being deceived by never relieving. In short,
 10 I now find the truest way of finding esteem even from the indigent, is *to give away nothing, and thus have much in our power to give.*"

LETTER XXVIII.³

[On the great number of old maids and batchelors in London. Some of the causes.]

15 *From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.*

LATELY in company with my friend in black, whose conversation is now both my amusement and instruction, I could not avoid observing the great numbers of old batchelors and maiden
 20 ladies with which this city seems to be over-run. Sure marriage, said

3 of marriage] 62; *om. PL*

5 not] 62; *no PL*

6 go] 62; often go *PL*

8 observe that . . . impostors, and] 62; *om. PL*

9 never relieving] 62; impostors, for I never relieve any *PL*

10 find] 62; find that *PL*

11 *to give*] 62; *by giving PL* *and thus have*] 62; *to keep PL* *give*] 62; *give away PL*

¹ Cf. the same letter: 'Instead of hanging my room with pictures I intend to adorn it with maxims of frugality, . . . of which the following will serve as a specimen. "Look Sharp. Mind the mean chance. Money is money now. If you have a thousand pound, you can put your hands by your sides and say you are worth a thousand pounds every day of the year. Take a farthing from an hundred pound and it will be an hundred pound no longer"' (pp. 44-45).

² Mrs. Thrale reports a conversation that must have occurred several years after the composition of this sentence: 'Doctor Goldsmith said here one Day, in a merry Humor that every young Person setting out in Life should learn to love Gra[v]ly, I have says He known a Man disinherited merely for not loving Gravy;—I loved Gravy well enough—yet I got myself disinherited' (*Thraliana*, ed. Katharine C. Balderston [Oxford, 1942], i. 84). It seems probable that Goldsmith spoke of *hating* rather than *loving* gravy.

³ In the *Public Ledger* for Wednesday, 16 April 1760.

I, is not sufficiently encouraged, or we should never behold such crowds of batter'd beaux and decayed coquets still attempting to drive a trade they have been so long unfit for, and swarming upon the gaiety of the age. I behold an old batchelor in the most contemptible light, as an animal that lives upon the common stock without contributing his share: he is a beast of prey, and the laws should make use of as many stratagems and as much force to drive the reluctant savage into the toils, as the Indians when they hunt the hyena or the rhinoceros. The mob should be permitted to halloo after him, boys might play tricks on him with impunity, every well-bred company should laugh at him, and if, when turned of sixty, he offered to make love, his mistress might spit in his face, or, what would be perhaps a greater punishment, should fairly grant him the favour.

As for old maids, continued I, they should not be treated with so much severity, because I suppose none would be so if they could. No lady in her senses would chuse to make a subordinate figure at christenings and lyings-in, when she might be the principal herself; nor curry favour with a sister in-law, when she might command an husband, nor toil in preparing custards, when she might lie abed and give directions how they ought to be made, nor stifle all her sensations in demure formality, when she might with matrimonial freedom shake her acquaintance by the hand, and wink at a double entendre. No lady could be so very silly as to live single, if she could help it. I consider an unmarried lady declining into the vale of years, as one of those charming countries bordering on China that lies waste for want of proper inhabitants. We are not to accuse the country, but the ignorance of its neighbours, who are insensible of its beauties, though at liberty to enter and cultivate the soil.

Indeed Sir, replied my companion, you are very little acquainted with the English ladies to think they are old maids against their will. I dare venture to affirm that you can hardly select one of them all, but has had frequent offers of marriage, which, either pride or

2 batter'd] 62; old batter'd *PL*

3-4 for, and . . . the age] 62; for *PL*

4 behold] 62; view *PL*

8 the toils] 62; his toils *PL*

9 hyena] 62; elephant *PL*

21 made] 62; done *PL*

27 proper inhabitants] 62; hands to cultivate the soil *PL*

28 country] 62; country of sterility *PL*

29 cultivate the soil] 62; take possession *PL*

avarice has not made her reject. Instead of thinking it a disgrace, they take every occasion to boast of their former cruelty; a soldier does not exult more when he counts over the wounds he has received, than a female veteran when she relates the wounds she has
 5 formerly given: exhaustless when she begins a narrative of the former death-dealing power of her eyes. She tells of the knight in gold lace who died with a single frown, and never rose again till—he was married to his maid; of the squire, who being cruelly denied, in a rage, flew to the window, and lifting up the sash, threw himself in
 10 an agony—into his arm chair; of the parson, who crossed in love, resolutely swallowed opium, which banished the stings of despised love by—making him sleep. In short, she talks over her former losses with pleasure, and, like some tradesmen, finds consolation in the many bankruptcies she has suffered.

15 For this reason, whenever I see a superannuated beauty still unmarried, I tacitly accuse her either of pride, avarice, coquetry, or affectation. There's Miss Jenny Tinderbox, I once remember her to have had some beauty, and a moderate fortune. Her elder sister happened to marry a man of quality, and this seemed as a statute
 20 of virginity against poor Jane. Because there was one lucky hit in the family, she was resolved not to disgrace it by introducing a tradesman; by thus rejecting her equals, and neglected or despised by her superiors, she now acts in the capacity of tutoress to her sister's children, and undergoes the drudgery of three servants with-
 25 out receiving the wages of one.

Miss Squeeze was a pawnbrokers daughter; her father had early taught her that money was a very good thing, and left her a moderate fortune at his death. She was so perfectly sensible of the value of what she had got, that she was resolved never to part with a farthing
 30 without an equality on the part of her suitor; she thus refused several

1 has not] 62; *om. PL*

4 she relates] 62; relates *PL*

6 eyes. She] 62; eyes, she *PL*

7 till—] 62; till *PL*

8 denied,] 62; denied *PL*

10 agony—] 62; agony *PL* parson] 62; person *PL*

11 resolutely] 62; *om. PL*

11-12 banished the . . . In short,] 62; made him sleep, which made him, in short, different from all the rest of the world: *PL*

13 and, like some tradesmen,] 62; and *PL*

15 For this reason, whenever] 62; Whenever *PL*

20 virginity against poor Jane] 62; celibacy against her *PL*

22 by thus] 62; thus *PL*

offers made her by people who wanted to better themselves, as the saying is; and grew old and ill natured, without ever considering that she should have made an abatement in her pretensions, from her face being pale, and marked with the small-pox. Lady Betty Tempest on the contrary had beauty, with fortune and family. But, 5 fond of conquest, she passed from triumph to triumph; she had read plays and romances, and there had learned that a plain man of common sense was no better than a fool; such she refused, and sighed only for the gay, giddy, inconstant and thoughtless; after she had thus rejected hundreds who liked her, and sighed for hundreds 10 who despised her, she found herself insensibly deserted; at present she is company only for her aunts and cousins, and sometimes makes one in a country-dance, with only one of the chairs for a partner, casts off round a joint-stool, and sets to a corner cupboard. In a word, she is treated with civil contempt from every quarter, and 15 placed like a piece of old fashioned lumber, merely to fill up a corner.

But, Sophronia, the sagacious Sophronia; how shall I mention her? She was taught to love Greek, and hate the men from her very infancy: she has rejected fine gentlemen because they were not pedants, and pedants because they were not fine gentlemen; her 20 exquisite sensibility has taught her to discover every fault in every lover, and her inflexible justice has prevented her pardoning them; thus she rejected several offers, till the wrinkles of age had overtaken her; and now, without one good feature in her face, she talks incessantly of the beauties of the mind. Farewell. 25

3 an abatement in her pretensions, from] 62; allowance for *PL*

4 Lady] *PL*; *par.* 62

5 on the contrary] 62; *om.* *PL*

5-6 But, fond of conquest] 62; Fond of conquest, however *PL*

7 there had] 62; had there *PL*

8 such] 62; these *PL*

11-14 at present... corner cupboard] 62; she found herself often with only her aunts and cousins, and has sometimes danced country dances with one of the chairs for a partner *PL*

15 treated] 62; now treated *PL*

16 a piece of old fashioned lumber] 62; an old fashioned cupboard *PL*

18 very] 62; *om.* *PL*

21 has] 62; *om.* *PL*

21-22 every lover] 62; her lovers *PL*

22 has] 62; *om.* *PL*

25 Farewell.] 62; *om.* *PL*

LETTER XXIX.¹

[A description of a club of authors.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

5 WERE we to estimate the learning of the English by the number of books that are every day published among them, perhaps no country, not even China itself could equal them in this particular.² I have reckoned not less than twenty-three new books published in one day; which, upon computation, makes eight thou-
 10 sand three hundred and ninety-five in one year. Most of these are not confined to one single science, but embrace the whole circle. History, politics, poetry, mathematics, metaphysics, and the philosophy of nature are all comprized in a manual not larger than that in which our children are taught the letters. If then we suppose the
 15 learned of England to read but an eighth part of the works which daily come from the press, (and sure none can pretend to learning upon less easy terms) at this rate every scholar will read a thousand books in one year. From such a calculation you may conjecture what an amazing fund of literature a man must be possessed of, who thus
 20 reads three new books every day, not one of which but contains all the good things that ever were said or written.

And yet I know not how it happens, but the English are not in reality so learned as would seem from this calculation. We meet but few who know all arts and sciences to perfection; whether it is
 25 that the generality are incapable of such extensive knowledge, or that the authors of those books are not adequate instructors. In China the emperor himself takes cognisance of all the doctors in the kingdom who profess authorship.³ In England, every man may be an author that can write; for they have by law a liberty not
 30 only of saying what they please, but of being also as dull as they please.

30-31 also as dull as they please] 62; as dull as they think proper PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Monday, 14 April 1760.

² Cf. Samuel Johnson in the *Idler*, No. 85: 'One of the peculiarities which distinguish the present age is the multiplication of books. Every day brings new advertisements of literary undertakings, and we are flattered with repeated promises of growing wise on easier terms than our progenitors.'

³ For the Chinese emperors' interest in the production of books by the doctors see Du Halde, i. 378.

Yesterday, I testified my surprize to the man in black, where writers could be found in sufficient number to throw off the books I daily saw crowding from the press. I at first imagined, that their learned seminaries might take this method of instructing the world. But to obviate this objection, my companion assured me, that the doctors of colleges never wrote, and that some of them had actually forgot their reading: but if you desire, continued he, to see a collection of authors, I fancy I can introduce you this evening to a club, which assembles every Saturday at seven, at the sign of the Broom near Islington, to talk over the business of the last, and the entertainment of the week ensuing. I accepted his invitation, we walked together, and entered the house some time before the usual hour for the company assembling.

My friend took this opportunity of letting me into the characters of the principal members of the club, not even the host excepted, who, it seems, was once an author himself, but preferred by a bookseller to this situation as a reward for his former services.

The first person, said he, of our society, is doctor Nonentity, a metaphysician. Most people think him a profound scholar; but as he seldom speaks, I cannot be positive in that particular; he generally spreads himself before the fire, sucks his pipe, talks little, drinks much, and is reckoned very good company. I'm told he writes indexes to perfection, he makes essays on the origin of evil, philosophical enquiries upon any subject, and draws up an answer to any book upon twenty-four hours warning. You may distinguish him from the rest of the company by his long grey wig, and the blue handkerchief round his neck.

The next to him in merit and esteem is Tim Syllabub, a drole creature; he sometimes shines as a star of the first magnitude among the choice spirits of the age; he is reckoned equally excellent at a rebus, a riddle, a bawdy song, and an hymn for the tabernacle. You'll know him by his shabby finery, his powdered wig, dirty shirt, and broken silk stockings.

1 Yesterday, I . . . in black] 62; The man in black paid me a visit yesterday, when I testified my surprize *PL*

2 number] 62; numbers *PL*

12-13 some time . . . company assembling] 62; at the usual hour, but the company were not yet assembled *PL*

17 for] 62; of *PL*

23 he makes] 62; makes *PL*

32 You'll] *PL*; You will 62

After him succeeds Mr. Tibs, a very *useful hand*; he writes receipts for the bite of a mad dog, and throws off an eastern tale to perfection;¹ he understands the *business* of an author as well as any man; for no bookseller alive can cheat him; you may distinguish him by
 5 the peculiar clumsiness of his figure and the coarseness of his coat: however, though it be coarse, (as he frequently tells the company) he has paid for it.

Lawyer Squint is the politician of the society; he makes speeches for parliament, writes addresses to his fellow subjects, and letters
 10 to noble commanders; he gives the history of every new play, and finds *seasonable thoughts* upon every occasion.—My companion was proceeding in his description, when the host came running in with terror on his countenance to tell us, that the door was beset with bailiffs. If that be the case then, says my companion, we had as good
 15 be going; for I am positive we shall not see one of the company this night. Wherefore disappointed we were both obliged to return home, he to enjoy the oddities which compose his character alone, and I to write as usual to my friend the occurrences of the day. Adieu.

LETTER XXX.²

20

[The proceedings of the club of authors.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

BY my last advices from Moscow, I find the caravan has not yet departed for China: I still continue to write, expecting that you
 25 may receive a large number of my letters at once. In them you will

13 with] 62; by PL

19 Before the heading PL has the following par., om. 62: 67 The editor on this, and every other occasion, has endeavoured to translate the letter-writer in such a manner as he himself, had he perfectly understood English, would have written. The reader is requested also to impute all the nonsense and dullness he may happen to find in this, and every other letter, to errors of the press.

24 I still] 62; however, I still PL

expecting] 62; in expectation PL

25 may] 62; will PL

¹ In the introductory essay (possibly by Goldsmith) in the *Weekly Magazine*, No. I (29 December 1759), one of the authors who humorously propose to write for the periodical is said to invent 'cures for the bite of a mad dog' and others to 'throw ye off an Eastern tale'.

² In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 2 May 1760.

find rather a minute detail of English peculiarities, than a general picture of their manners or disposition. Happy it were for mankind if all travellers would thus, instead of characterising a people in general terms, lead us into a detail of those minute circumstances which first influenced their opinion; the genius of a country should 5 be investigated with a kind of experimental enquiry: by this means we should have more precise and just notions of foreign nations, and detect travellers themselves when they happened to form wrong conclusions.

My friend and I repeated our visit to the club of authors; where, 10 upon our entrance, we found the members all assembled and engaged in a loud debate. The poet, in shabby finery, holding a manuscript in his hand, was earnestly endeavouring to persuade the company to hear him read the first book of an heroic poem, which he had composed the day before. But against this, all the members 15 very warmly objected. They knew no reason why any member of the club should be indulged with a particular hearing, when many of them had published whole volumes which had never been looked in. They insisted that the law should be observed, where reading in company was expressly noticed. It was in vain that the plaintiff 20 pleaded the peculiar merit of his piece; he spoke to an assembly insensible to all his remonstrances; the book of laws was opened, and read by the secretary, where it was expressly enacted, "That whatsoever poet, speech-maker, critic, or historian, should presume to engage the company by reading his own works, he was to lay 25 down sixpence previous to opening the manuscript, and should be charged one shilling an hour while he continued reading; the said shilling to be equally distributed among the company as a recompence for their trouble."

1 English] 62; the English *PL*

2 manners] 62; manners, genius, *PL*

3-4 in general terms] 62; at once *PL*

5-6 the genius . . . experimental enquiry:] 62; *om. PL*

7 have] 62; be led to have *PL* nations] 62; countries *PL*

9 conclusions.] *In PL the last paragraph of the letter follows this paragraph.*

10 repeated] 62; lately repeated *PL* authors] 62; authors, I mentioned some time ago *PL*

12 The] 62; A *PL*; *par.* 62 in shabby finery] 62; with a pale complexion *PL*

18 which had . . . looked in] 62; without ever being looked into *PL*

19-20 in company] 62; to the company *PL*

22 to all] 62; of all *PL*

26 opening] 62; his opening *PL*

29 trouble] 62; pain in listening *PL*

Our poet seemed at first to shrink at the penalty, hesitating for some time whether he should deposit the fine, or shut up the poem; but looking round, and perceiving two strangers in the room, his love of fame out-weighed his prudence, and laying down the sum
 5 by law established, he insisted on his prerogative.

A profound silence ensuing, he began by explaining his design. Gentlemen, says he, the present piece is not one of your common epic poems, which come from the press like paper kites in summer; there are none of your Turnuses or Didos in it; it is an heroical
 10 description of nature. I only beg you'll endeavour to make your souls unison with mine, and hear with the same enthusiasm with which I have written. The poem begins with the description of an author's bed-chamber: the picture was sketched in my own apartment; for you must know, gentlemen, that I am myself the hero.
 15 Then, putting himself into the attitude of an orator, with all the emphasis of voice and action, he proceeded.

Where the Red Lion flaring o'er the way,
 Invites each passing stranger that can pay;
 Where Calvert's butt, and Parson's black champaign,¹
 20 Regale the drabs and bloods of Drury-lane;²
 There in a lonely room, from bailiffs snug,
 The muse found Scroggen stretch'd beneath a rug,

5 prerogative] 62; privilege of reading *PL*

8 like paper kites in summer] 62; every day *PL*

10 make] 62; tune *PL*

11 mine] 62; mine while you listen *PL*

12 have written] 62; shall read *PL*

¹ 'The Calverts and Humphrey Parsons were noted brewers of "entire butt beer" or porter, also known familiarly as "British Burgundy" and "black Champagne." Calvert's "Best Butt Beer" figures on the sign in Hogarth's *Beer Street*, 1751' (Dobson's note).

² Throughout the eighteenth century Drury Lane was noted for its prostitutes (see Steele in the *Tatler*, No. 46). By Goldsmith's day it was apparently inhabited by the dregs of the profession; see 'A Congratulatory Epistle from a Reformed Rake, to John F—g, Esq; upon the new Scheme of reclaiming Prostitutes', in the *Literary Magazine* for June 1758 (iii. 257): 'In the account published in the *Public Advertiser*, of the search that was made for prostitutes, I find that it was limited to *Drury-lane*, *Hedge-lane*, and *St. Giles's*. I own if I had been a peace-officer upon that occasion, I should have stepped into the *Turk's head*, or indeed, almost any other house in *Bowstreet*, and have found more proper objects of correction, than those half-starved wretches, rather a disgust, than incitement, to incontinence.' The wording of Goldsmith's line may have been influenced by Pope's *Second Satire of Donne, Versified*, l. 64: 'Paltry and proud, as drabs in Drury-lane.'

A window patch'd with paper lent a ray,
 That dimly shew'd the state in which he lay;
 The sanded floor that grits beneath the tread;
 The humid wall with paltry pictures spread:
 The royal game of goose was there in view,
 And the twelve rules the royal martyr drew;¹
 The seasons² fram'd with listing³ found a place,
 And brave prince William shew'd his lamp-black face:⁴
 The morn was cold, he views with keen desire
 The rusty grate unconscious of a fire:
 With beer and milk arrears the frieze was scor'd,⁵
 And five crack'd tea cups dress'd the chimney board.
 A night-cap deck'd his brows instead of bay,
 A cap by night—a stocking all the day!⁶

5

10

13 A] PL; no par. 62

¹ Maxims of morality ascribed to Charles I, frequently printed as a broadside.

² Prints depicting the seasons were apparently very popular; cf. *Ben Johnson's Jests* (1751), p. 60: 'One coming into a Friend's House, he saw the four Seasons of the Year hanging. . . .' Miss Balderston notes that 'at least four sets of "Seasons" in mezzotint were published about the year 1759' (*Collected Letters*, p. 64).

³ Cf. Goldsmith's letter of 15 August 1758 to Mrs. Jane Lawder: 'Instead of hanging my room with pictures I intend to adorn it with maxims of frugality, these . . . won't be a bit too expensive, for . . . my landlady's daughter shall frame them with the parings of my black waistcoat . . .' (*ibid.*, pp. 44-45).

⁴ William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, third son of George II. In 1757 he was placed in command of an army of the Allies to oppose 'the march of the *French* troops into the circle of *Westphalia*'; but his retreat 'open'd an easy passage . . . to the very gates of *Hanover*'. He subsequently signed a 'convention' of neutrality very unfavourable to the Allies and returned home in disgrace (*Gentleman's Magazine*, xxvii [1757], 232, 374-7, 424-5, 479). Dobson notes that the 'lamp-black face' would seem to imply that the portrait was a silhouette.

⁵ In a letter of 14 August 1758 to Robert Bryanton, Goldsmith speaks of himself as 'here in a garret writing for bread, and expecting to be dunned for a milk score!' (*Collected Letters*, pp. 40-41).

⁶ An earlier version of these verses, together with a slight account of their composition, occurs in Goldsmith's letter of c. 13 January 1759 to his brother Henry: 'Your last letter . . . was [to]o short, you should have given me your opinion of the design of the heroical poem which I sent you. You remember I intended to introduce the hero of the Poem as lying in a paltry alehouse you may take the following specimen of the manner; which I flatter myself is quite original. The room in which he lies may be describ[ed] somewhat this way.

A Window patch'd with paper lent a ray
 That feebly shew'd the state in which he lay.
 The sanded floor, that grits beneath the tread
 The humid wall with paltry pictures spread.

[Note continued overleaf.]

With this last line he seem'd so much elated, that he was unable to proceed; there gentlemen, cries he, there is a description for you; Rablais's bed-chamber is but a fool to it:

A cap by night—a stocking all the day!

- 5 There is sound and sense, and truth, and nature in the trifling compass of ten little syllables.

He was too much employed in self admiration to observe the company; who by nods, winks, shrugs, and stifled laughter, testified every mark of contempt. He turned severally to each for their
10 opinion, and found all however ready to applaud. One swore it was inimitable; another said it was damn'd fine; and a third cried out in rapture Carissimo. At last addressing himself to the president, and pray Mr. Squint, says he, let us have your opinion. Mine, answered the president, (taking the manuscript out of the author's
15 hands) may this glass suffocate me, but I think it equal to any thing I have seen; and I fancy (continued he, doubling up the poem, and forcing it into the author's pocket) that you will get great honour when it comes out; so I shall beg leave to put it in. We will not intrude upon your good nature, in desiring to hear more of it at
20 present; *ex ungue Herculem*, we are satisfied, perfectly satisfied. The author made two or three attempts to pull it out a second time,

10 however] 62; *om. PL*

13 Squint] 62; Squirt *PL*

17 forcing] 62; thrusting *PL*

18 so] 62; and so *PL*

19 intrude] 62; impose *PL* of it] 62; on't *PL*

The game of goose was there expos'd to view,
And the twelve rules the Royal Martyr drew.
The seasons, fram'd with listing, found a place,
And Prussia's Monarch shew'd his lamp black face.
The morn was cold he views with keen desire,
A rusty grate unconscious of a fire.
An unpaid reck'ning on the [fr]eeze was scor'd
And five crack'd teacups dress'd the chimney [board.]

'And Now imagine after his soliloquy the landlord to make his appearance in order to Dun him for the reckoning,

Not with that face so servile and so gay
That welcomes every stranger that can pay
With sulky Eye he smok'd the patient man
Then pull'd his breeches tight, and thus began. &c.

All this is taken you see from Nature' (*Collected Letters*, pp. 63-65, with a few corrections from the manuscript).

and the president made as many to prevent him. Thus though with reluctance he was at last obliged to sit down, contented with the commendations for which he had paid.

When this tempest of poetry and praise was blown over, one of the company changed the subject, by wondering how any man could
5 be so dull as to write poetry at present, since prose itself would hardly pay.¹ Would you think it, gentlemen, continued he, I have actually written last week sixteen prayers, twelve bawdy jests, and three sermons, all at the rate of sixpence a-piece; and what is still
10 more extraordinary, the bookseller has lost by the bargain. Such sermons would once have gained me a prebend's stall; but now alas we have neither piety, taste, nor humour among us. Positively if this season does not turn out better than it has begun, unless the ministry commit some blunders to furnish us with a new topic of abuse, I shall resume my old business of working at the press, instead of
15 finding it employment.

The whole club seemed to join in condemning the season, as one of the worst that had come for some time; a gentleman particularly observed that the nobility were never known to subscribe worse than
20 at present. I know not how it happens, said he, though I follow them up as close as possible, yet I can hardly get a single subscription in a week. The houses of the great are as inaccessible as a frontier garrison at mid-night. I never see a nobleman's door half opened that some surly porter or footman does not stand full in the breach. I was yesterday to wait with a subscription proposal upon my lord
25 Squash the creolian. I had posted myself at his door the whole morning, and just as he was getting into his coach, thrust my proposal snugg into his hand folded up in the form of a letter from myself. He just glanced at the superscription, and, not knowing the hand, consigned it to his valet de chambre; this respectable
30

3 for which he had paid] 62; which had been paid for *PL*

21 a single] 62; one *PL*

22-23 The houses . . . at mid-night.] 62; *om. PL*

23 half] 62; *om. PL*

24 full] 62; *om. PL*

25 subscription] 62; *om. PL*

28 snugg] 62; *om. PL* the form of] 62; *om. PL*

¹ After the discussion of his poem in the letter quoted above, Goldsmith says: 'Poetry is much an easier and more agreeable species of composition than prose, and could a man live by it, it were no unpleasant employment to be a Poet' (*ibid.*, pp. 65-66).

personage treated it as his master, and put it into the hands of the porter. The porter grasped my proposal frowning; and, measuring my figure from top to toe, put it back into my own hands unopened.

To the devil I pitch all the nobility, cries a little man, in a peculiar
 5 accent, I am sure they have of late used me most scurvily. You must know, gentlemen, some time ago, upon the arrival of a certain noble duke from his travels, I set myself down, and vamp'd up a fine flaunting, poetical panegyric, which I had written in such a strain, that I fancied it would have even wheedled milk from a mouse. In
 10 this I represented the whole kingdom welcoming his grace to his native soil, not forgetting the loss France and Italy would sustain in their arts by his departure. I expected to touch, for a bank bill at least; so folding up my verses in gilt paper, I gave my last half crown to a genteel servant to be the bearer. My letter was safely conveyed
 15 to his grace, and the servant after four hours absence, during which time I led the life of a fiend, returned with a letter four times as big as mine. Guess my extasy at the prospect of so fine a return. I eagerly took the paquet into my hands, that trembled to receive it. I kept it some time unopened before me, brooding over the expected
 20 treasure it contained, when opening it, as I hope to be saved, gentlemen, his grace had sent me in payment for my poem no Bank bills, but six copies of verse, each longer than mine, addressed to him upon the same occasion.

A nobleman, cries a member, who had hitherto been silent, is
 25 created as much for the confusion of us authors as the catch-pole. I'll tell you a story, gentlemen, which is as true as that this pipe is made of clay. When I was delivered of my first book, I owed my taylor for a suit of cloaths, but that is nothing new, you know, and may be any man's case as well as mine. Well, owing him for a suit

1 as his master] 62; just as his master had done *PL*

2 grasped my] 62; took the *PL*

3 own hands] 62; hand *PL*

10 kingdom welcoming] 62; kingdom, and in their name welcomed *PL*

12 expected to touch] 62; had expected to prevail *PL*

16 letter] 62; letter in his hand *PL*

17 mine] 62; that I had sent *PL* return.] 62; return, *PL*

20 it contained] 62; within *PL*

21 for my poem] 62; *om. PL*

22 copies of . . . than mine] 62; long poems *PL* him] 62; himself *PL*

24 A nobleman] 62; The nobility *PL*

24-25 is created . . . the catch-pole] 62; are certainly created for the confusion of authors *PL*

29 him] 62; my taylor *PL*

of cloaths, and hearing that my book took very well, he sent for his money, and insisted upon being paid immediately: though I was at that time rich in fame, for my book run like wild-fire, yet I was very short in money, and being unable to satisfy his demand, prudently resolved to keep my chamber, preferring a prison of my own chusing 5 at home, to one of my taylor's chusing abroad. In vain the bailiffs used all their arts to decoy me from my citadel, in vain they sent to let me know that a gentleman wanted to speak with me at the next tavern, in vain they came with an urgent message from my aunt in the country; in vain I was told that a particular friend was at the point of death, and desired to take his last farewell; I was deaf, insensible, rock, adamant, the bailiffs could make no impression on my hard heart, for I effectually kept my liberty by never stirring out of the room.

This was very well for a fortnight; when one morning I received a most splendid message from the carl of Doomsday, importing, that 15 he had read my book, and was in raptures with every line of it; he impatiently longed to see the author, and had some designs which might turn out greatly to my advantage. I paused upon the contents of this message, and found there could be no deceit, for the card was gilt at the edges, and the bearer, I was told, had quite the looks of 20 a gentleman. Witness ye powers, how my heart triumphed at my own importance, I saw a long perspective of felicity before me, I applauded the taste of the times, which never saw genius forsaken; I had prepared a set introductory speech for the occasion, five glaring compliments for his lordship, and two more modest for myself. 25 The next morning therefore, in order to be punctual to my appointment, I took coach, and ordered the fellow to drive to the street and house mentioned in his lordship's address. I had the precaution to pull up the windows as I went along to keep off the busy part of mankind, and big with expectation, fancied the coach never went fast enough. 30 At length, however, the wish'd for moment of its stopping arrived; this for some time I impatiently expected, and letting down the

1 hearing] 62; he hearing *PL* he sent] 62; sent *PL*

10-11 in vain I . . . last farewell;] 62; *om. PL*

12 the bailiffs] 62; they *PL*

18 my] 62; his *PL*

24 glaring] 62; *om. PL*

25 more modest] 62; *om. PL*

29 to keep . . . of mankind] 62; *om. PL*

30 the coach] 62; I *PL*

31 its] 62; the coach's *PL*

32 this] 62; it was what *PL* impatiently] 62; had impatiently *PL*

door in a transport, in order to take a previous view of his lordship's magnificent palace and situation, I found—poison to my sight! I found myself, not in an elegant street, but a paltry lane, not at a nobleman's door, but the door of a spunging-house; I found the
 5 coachman had all this while been driving me to jail, and I saw the bailiff with a devil's face, coming out to secure me.

To a philosopher, no circumstance, however trifling, is too minute; he finds instruction and entertainment in occurrences, which are passed over by the rest of mankind as low, trite, and
 10 indifferent; it is from the number of these particulars, which, to many, appear insignificant, that he is at last enabled to form general conclusions: this, therefore, must be my excuse for sending so far as China accounts of manners and follies, which, though minute in their own nature, serve more truly to characterise this people than
 15 histories of their public treaties, courts, ministers, negotiations, and ambassadors. Adieu.

LETTER XXXI.¹

[The Perfection of the Chinese, in the art of Gardening. The description of a Chinese garden.]

20 *From Lien Chi Altangi to ***** merchant in Amsterdam.*

THE English have not yet brought the art of gardening to the same perfection with the Chinese,² but have lately begun to imitate them; nature is now followed with greater assiduity than formerly;³ the trees are suffered to shoot out into the utmost luxuri-
 25 ance; the streams, no longer forced from their native beds, are

¹ door] 62; coach door PL

⁶ out to secure] 62; down to receive PL

⁷⁻¹⁶ To a philosopher . . . and ambassadors.] 62; in PL this par. follows the first par. of the letter.

²² begun] 62; began PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 18 April 1760.

² In this letter Goldsmith seems to show acquaintance with Sir William Chambers's 'Of the Art of Laying out Gardens among the Chinese' in his *Designs of Chinese Buildings* (1757). Goldsmith may have seen the essay as it was reprinted in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1757 (xxvii. 216-19), in the *Literary Magazine* for 15 April-15 May 1757, or in the *Annual Register* for 1758. The references in the ensuing notes are to the *Gentleman's Magazine*.

³ Chambers says of the Chinese gardens that 'Nature is their pattern, and their aim is to imitate her in all her beautiful irregularities' (p. 216).

permitted to wind along the vallies; spontaneous flowers take place of the finished parterre, and the enamelled meadow of the shaven green.

Yet still the English are far behind us in this charming art; their designers have not yet attained a power of uniting instruction with beauty. An European will scarcely conceive my meaning, when I say that there is scarce a garden in China which does not contain some fine moral couch'd under the general design, where one is not taught wisdom as he walks, and feels the force of some noble truth, or delicate precept resulting from the disposition of the groves, streams or grottos. Permit me to illustrate what I mean by a description of my gardens at Quamsi.¹ My heart still hovers round those scenes of former happiness with pleasure; and I find satisfaction in enjoying them at this distance, tho' but in imagination.

You descended from the house between two groves of trees, planted in such a manner, that they were impenetrable to the eye; while on each hand the way was adorned with all that was beautiful in porcelaine, statuary, and painting. This passage from the house opened into an area surrounded with rocks, flowers, trees and shrubs, but all so disposed as if each was the spontaneous production of nature. As you proceeded forward on this lawn, to your right and left-hand were two gates, opposite each other, of very different architecture and design; and before you lay a temple built rather with minute elegance than ostentation.

The right-hand gate was planned with the utmost simplicity, or rather rudeness; ivy clasp'd round the pillars, the baleful cyprus hung over it; time seemed to have destroyed all the smoothness and regularity of the stone: two champions with lifted clubs appeared in the act of guarding its access; dragons and serpents were seen in the most hideous attitudes, to deter the spectator from approaching; and the perspective view² that lay behind seemed dark and gloomy

4 their] 62; since their *PL*

8 not] 62; *om. PL*

12 Quamsi] 62; Luamsi, (mine did I say) of those which were mine *PL*

25 planned] 62; built *PL*

31 behind] 62; behind it *PL*

¹ Possibly the same as the province of Quang-si (Du Halde, i. 119), though in Letter I he is said to be a native of Honan.

² Chambers describes how in their gardens the Chinese form 'prospects in perspective' (p. 219).

to the last degree; the stranger was tempted to enter only from the motto: PERVIA VIRTUTI.

The opposite gate was formed in a very different manner; the architecture was light, elegant, and inviting; flowers hung in wreaths
 5 round the pillars; all was finished in the most exact and masterly manner; the very stone of which it was built still preserved its polish; nymphs, wrought by the hand of a master, in the most alluring attitudes, beckoned the stranger to approach; while all that lay behind, as far as the eye could reach, seemed gay, luxuriant, and
 10 capable of affording endless pleasure. The motto itself contributed to invite him; for over the gate was written these words, FACILIS DESCENSUS.¹

By this time I fancy you begin to perceive that the gloomy gate was designed to represent the road to virtue; the opposite, the more
 15 agreeable passage to vice. It is but natural to suppose, that the spectator was always tempted to enter by the gate which offered him so many allurements; I always in these cases left him to his choice; but generally found that he took to the left, which promised most entertainment.

20 Immediately upon his entering the gate of vice, the trees and flowers were disposed in such a manner as to make the most pleasing impression; but as he walked farther on he insensibly found the garden assume the air of a wilderness, the landskips began to darken, the paths grew more intricate, he appeared to go downwards, fright-
 25 ful rocks seemed to hang over his head, gloomy caverns, unexpected precipices, awful ruins, heaps of unburied bones, and terrifying sounds, caused by unseen waters,² began to take place of what at first appeared so lovely; it was in vain to attempt returning, the labyrinth was too much perplexed for any but myself to find the
 30 way back. In short, when sufficiently impressed with the horrors of what he saw, and the imprudence of his choice, I brought him by

2 motto: PERVIA VIRTUTI] 62; motto which I received from an English merchant there: PERVIA VIRTUTI, *pervious to virtue* PL

12 DESCENSUS] 62; DECENSUS, *the descent is easy* PL

¹ *Æneid* vi. 126.

² Cf. Chambers, p. 217: 'In their scenes of horror, they introduce impending rocks, dark caverns, and impetuous cataracts. . . .' And concerning the 'enchanted scenes' he says: 'Sometimes they make a rapid stream, or torrent, pass under ground, the turbulent noise of which strikes the ear of the new-comer, who is at a loss to know from whence it proceeds.'

an hidden door, a shorter way back into the area from whence at first he had strayed.

The gloomy gate now presented itself before the stranger; and though there seemed little in its appearance to tempt his curiosity, yet encouraged by the motto, he generally proceeded. The darkness 5 of the entrance, the frightful figures that seemed to obstruct his way, the trees of a mournful green, conspired at first to disgust him: as he went forward, however, all began to open and wear a more pleasing appearance, beautiful cascades, beds of flowers, trees loaded with fruit or blossoms, and unexpected brooks, improved the scene: 10 he now found that he was ascending, and, as he proceeded, all nature grew more beautiful, the prospect widened as he went higher, even the air itself seemed to become more pure. Thus pleased, and happy from unexpected beauties, I at last led him to an arbour, from whence he could view the garden and the whole country 15 around,¹ and where he might own, that the road to Virtue terminated in Happiness.

Though from this description you may imagine, that a vast tract of ground was necessary to exhibit such a pleasing variety in, yet be assured, that I have seen several gardens in England take up ten 20 times the space which mine did,² without half the beauty. A very small extent of ground is enough for an elegant taste; the greater room is required if magnificence is in view. There is no spot, tho' ever so little, which a skilful designer might not thus improve, so as to convey a delicate allegory, and impress the mind with truths the 25 most useful and necessary. Adieu.

7 trees] 62; tree *PL*

25-26 truths the . . . and necessary] 62; the most useful and necessary truths *PL*

¹ Cf. Chambers, p. 218: 'Various are the artifices they employ to surprize. Sometimes they lead you through dark caverns and gloomy passages, at the issue of which you are, on a sudden, struck with the view of a delicious landscape, enriched with every thing that luxuriant nature affords most beautiful. At other times you are conducted thro' avenues and walks, that gradually diminish and grow rugged, till the passage is at length entirely intercepted, and rendered impracticable, by bushes, briars, and stones; when unexpectedly a rich and exquisite prospect opens to view, so much the more pleasing, as it was less looked for.'

² Chambers says, 'The gardens . . . which I saw in *China*, were small' (p. 216).

LETTER XXXII.¹

[Of the degeneracy of some of the English nobility. A Mushroom feast among the Tartars.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

IN a late excursion with my friend into the country, a gentleman with a blue ribbon tied round his shoulder, and in a chariot drawn by six horses passed swiftly by us, attended with a numerous train of captains, lacquies, and coaches filled with women. When we were recovered from the dust raised by his cavalcade, and could continue our discourse without danger of suffocation, I observed to my companion, that all this state and equipage which he seemed to despise, would in China be regarded with the utmost reverence, because such distinctions were always the reward of merit;² the greatness of a Mandarin's retinue being a most certain mark of the superiority of his abilities or virtue.

The gentleman who has now passed us, replied my companion, has no claims from his own merit to distinction, he is possessed neither of abilities nor virtue; it is enough for him that one of his ancestors was possessed of these qualities two hundred years before him. There was a time, indeed, when his family deserved their titles, but they are long since degenerated, and his ancestors for more than a century have been more and more solicitous to keep up the breed of their dogs and horses than that of their children. This very nobleman, simple as he seems, is descended from a race of statesmen

9 coaches filled with women] 62; women on side saddles PL

10 his] 62; this PL

12 despise] 62; despise in England PL

14 were] 62; are there PL

17 has now] 62; now PL

18 distinction] 62; the distinctions he enjoys PL

18-19 is possessed neither of] 62; has neither PL

22-23 his ancestors . . . more and] 62; are now PL

24 that of their children] 62; their own PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 22 April 1760.

² See Du Halde, i. 268-9: 'Nobility is not hereditary in China. . . . However illustrious any Man has been, tho' he had arriv'd to the highest Dignity of the Empire, his Children have their Fortune to make; and if they want Parts, or love their Ease, they become like the common People. . . . It is true that a Son may succeed to his Father's Estate, but not to his Dignities or Reputation, to which he must raise by the same Degrees as his Father did.'

and heroes; but unluckily his great grandfather marrying a cook maid, and she having a trifling passion for his lordship's groom, they some how crossed the strain, and produced an heir who took after his mother in his great love to *good eating*, and his father in a violent affection for *horse flesh*. These passions have for some generations 5 passed on from father to son, and are now become the characteristics of the family, his present lordship being equally remarkable for his kitchen and his stable.

But such a nobleman, cried I, deserves our pity thus placed in so high a sphere of life, which only the more exposes to contempt. A 10 king may confer titles, but it is personal merit alone that insures respect. I suppose, added I, that such men who are so very unfit to fill up their dignity, are despised by their equals, neglected by their inferiors, and condemned to live among involuntary dependants in irksome solitude? 15

You are still under a mistake, replied my companion, for though this nobleman is a stranger to generosity; though he takes twenty opportunities in a day of letting his guests know how much he despises them; though he is possessed neither of taste, wit, nor wisdom; though incapable of improving others by his conversation, 20 and never known to enrich any by his bounty, yet for all this, his company is eagerly sought after: he is a lord, and that is as much as most people desire in a companion. Quality and title have such allurements, that hundreds are ready to give up all their own importance to cringe, to flatter, to look little, and to pall every pleasure 25 in constraint merely to be among the great, though without the least hopes of improving their understanding or sharing their generosity: they might be happy among their equals, but those are despised for company, where they are despised in turn. You saw what a crowd of humble cousins, card-ruined beaux, and captains on half pay, were 30 willing to make up this great man's retinue down to his country seat. Not one of all these that could not lead a more comfortable life at home in their little lodging of three shillings a week, with their

1 a cook] 62; the cook *PL*

3 strain] 62; breed *PL*

heir] 62; heir among them *PL*

5 These] 62; Their *PL*

7 present] 62; *om. PL*

10 the more exposes] 62; exposes him the more *PL*

20 others] 62; of others *PL*

27 understanding or sharing their generosity] 62; minds or fortune *PL*

33 lodging] 62; lodgings *PL*

lukewarm dinner, served up between two pewter plates from a cook's shop. Yet, poor devils, they are willing to undergo the impertinence and pride of their entertainer, merely to be thought to live among the great: they are willing to pass the summer in bondage, though
 5 conscious they are taken down only to approve his lordship's taste upon every occasion, to tag all his stupid observations with a *very true*, to praise his stable, and descant upon his claret and cookery.

The pitiful humiliations of the gentlemen you are now describing, said I, puts me in mind of a custom among the Tartars of Koreki,
 10 not entirely dissimilar to this we are now considering.* The Russians, who trade with them carry thither a kind of mushrooms, which they exchange for furs of squirrels, ermins, sables, and foxes. These mushrooms the rich Tartars lay up in large quantities for the winter; and when a nobleman makes a mushroom feast, all the neighbours
 15 around are invited. The mushrooms are prepared by boiling, by which the water acquires an intoxicating quality, and is a sort of drink which the Tartars prize beyond all other. When the nobility and ladies are assembled, and the ceremonies usual between people of distinction over, the mushroom broth goes freely round; they
 20 laugh, talk double entendre, grow fuddled, and become excellent company. The poorer sort, who love mushroom broth to distraction as well as the rich, but cannot afford it at the first hand, post themselves on these occasions round the huts of the rich, and watch the opportunity of the ladies and gentlemen as they come down to pass
 25 their liquor, and holding a wooden bowl, catch the delicious fluid, very little altered by filtration, being still strongly tintured with the

* Van Strahlenberg, a writer of credit, gives the same account of this people. Vid. an Historico Geographical Description of the north eastern parts of Europe and Asia, p. 397.

4 summer] 62; summer season *PL*

7 claret and] 62; *om. PL*

9 a custom] 62; some customs *PL*

10 this] 62; these *PL* now] 62; *om. PL*

11 mushrooms] 62; mushrooms, called in the Russian tongue muchamor *PL*

12 and foxes] 62; or foxes *PL*

16 water] 62; water in which they are prepared *PL*

18 and the] 62; and when the *PL*

19 over] 62; are over *PL*

22 afford] 62; afford to taste *PL*

intoxicating quality. Of this they drink with the utmost satisfaction, and thus they get as drunk and as jovial as their betters.¹

Happy nobility, cries my companion, who can fear no diminution of respect, unless by being seized with a stranguary; and who when most drunk, are most useful; though we have not this custom among us, I foresee, that if it were introduced, we might have many a toad-eater in England ready to drink from the wooden bowl on these occasions, and to praise the flavour of his lordship's liquor; as we have different classes of gentry, who knows but we might see a lord holding the bowl to a minister, a knight holding it to his lordship, and a simple 'squire drinking it double distilled from the loins of knighthood. For my part, I shall never for the future hear a great man's flatterers haranguing in his praise, that I shall not fancy I behold the wooden bowl; for I can see no reason why a man, who can live easily and happily at home, should bear the drudgery of decorum and the impertinence of his entertainer, unless intoxicated with a passion for all that was quality; unless he thought that whatever came from the great was delicious, and had the tincture of the mushroom in it. Adieu.

3 Happy] 62; *no par. PL* cries my companion,] 62; *om. PL*

5 most useful;] 62; even most useful. I must own, says my companion, *PL*, beginning a new *par.*

8 as] 62; besides, as *PL*

9 different] 62; several different *PL*

10 a knight . . . his lordship,] 62; *om. PL*

12 knighthood] 62; his lordship *PL*

13 his praise] 62; praise of his dinner *PL*

13-14 I behold the] 62; him with a *PL*

17 all that was] 62; *om. PL* unless he] 62; he *PL*

18 had the] 62; was fond of all that had a *PL*

19 it] 62; it, no matter how disagreeable the circumstances by which it was attained
PL

¹ As Goldsmith's note suggests, this passage is paraphrased from Philip John von Strahlenberg's *An Histori-geographical Description of the North and Eastern Parts of Europe and Asia* (1736). Goldsmith makes characteristic additions, such as the statement that 'they laugh, talk double entendre, grow fuddled, and become excellent company'.

LETTER XXXIII.¹

[The manner of writing among the Chinese. The eastern tales of Magazines, &c. ridiculed.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

I AM disgusted, O Fum Hoam, even to sickness disgusted. Is it possible to bear the presumption of these islanders, when they pretend to instruct me in the ceremonies of China! They lay it down as a maxim, that every person who comes from thence must express himself in metaphor; swear by Alla, rail against wine, and behave, and talk, and write like a Turk or Persian. They make no distinction between our elegant manners, and the voluptuous barbarities of our eastern neighbours. Where-ever I come, I raise either diffidence or astonishment; some fancy me no Chinese, because I am formed more like a man than a monster; and others wonder to find one born five thousand miles from England, endued with common sense. Strange, say they, that a man who has received his education at such a distance from London, should have common sense;² to be born out of England, and yet have common sense! impossible! He must be some Englishman in disguise; his very visage has nothing of the true exotic barbarity.

I yesterday received an invitation from a lady of distinction, who it seems had collected all her knowledge of eastern manners from fictions every day propagated here, under the titles of eastern tales, and oriental histories:³ she received me very politely, but seemed

7 bear] 62; hear PL these] PL; those 62

8 China] 62; China, and not be moved PL

11 Persian] 62; a Persian PL

18-19 to be born . . . common sense!] 62; om. PL

20 Englishman] 62; European PL

23 eastern manners] 62; the manners of the east PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 25 April 1760.

² Cf. the remarks of a Chinese in d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises*, lettre i (i. 4): 'Cependant le bruit s'étant répandu dans le voisinage qu'un Chinois étoit arrivé, on accouroit de toutes parts pour me voir, & l'on m'examinait avec des yeux aussi curieux, que si l'on eût considéré un de ces animaux rares. . . . Plusieurs étoient surpris de me trouver comme les autres hommes, j'entendois qu'ils disoient: *Cela est fort singulier, il est presque fait comme un François, qui pourroit le croire?*' See also the second paragraph of 'The Editor's Preface', added by Goldsmith to the collected edition of 1762, and the reference to Le Comte (above, p. 13).

³ On the vogue of these writings see Martha P. Conant, *The Oriental Tale in England in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1908).

to wonder that I neglected bringing opium and a tobacco box; when chairs were drawn for the rest of the company, I was assigned my place on a cushion on the floor. It was in vain that I protested the Chinese used chairs as in Europe;¹ she understood decorums too well to entertain me with the ordinary civilities.

I had scarce been seated according to her directions, when the footman was ordered to pin a napkin under my chin; this I protested against, as being no way Chinese; however the whole company, who it seems were a club of connoisseurs, gave it unanimously against me, and the napkin was pinned accordingly.

It was impossible to be angry with people, who seemed to err only from an excess of politeness, and I sat contented, expecting their importunities were now at an end; but as soon as ever dinner was served, the lady demanded whether I was for a plate of *Bear's claws*, or a slice of *Birds nests*? As these were dishes with which I was utterly unacquainted,² I was desirous of eating only what I knew, and therefore begged to be helped from a piece of beef that lay on the side-table: my request at once disconcerted the whole company. A Chinese eat beef! that could never be! there was no local propriety in Chinese beef, whatever there might be in Chinese pheasant. Sir, said my entertainer, I think I have some reasons to fancy myself a judge of these matters: in short, the Chinese never eat beef; so that I must be permitted to recommend the Pilaw, there was never better

5 to entertain . . . ordinary civilities] 62; not to entertain me in her own manner, which she called the manner of the east *PL*

7 footman] 62; footman with a napkin *PL* a napkin] 62; it *PL*

11 It was impossible to] 62; I could not *PL*

12 I] 62; *om. PL*

13 now] 62; *om. PL*

14 *Bear's claws*] 62; *Pilaw PL*

15 *Birds nests*] 62; *Cucushew PL*

20 Chinese pheasant] 62; pheasant *PL*

22 short] 62; short, Sir *PL*

22-23 so that . . . permitted to] 62; but pray let me *PL*

¹ In this and the following paragraphs, in which Goldsmith ridicules false ideas of China derived from 'eastern tales, and oriental histories', there is a curious mixture of genuine misconceptions about the Chinese and genuine Chinese customs about which Goldsmith could hardly have been ignorant, since they appear in his sources. This instance apparently belongs to the former class; at least Du Halde speaks of the Chinese as using chairs during both visits and feasts (i. 297, 299).

² As Goldsmith probably knew, he is here misrepresenting Chinese customs; see Du Halde, i. 314: '... Birds-nests . . . Bears-Paws, and the feet of diverse Wild Creatures . . . are Dainties fit for the Tables of Great Lords.'

dressed at Pekin; the saffron and rice are well boiled, and the spices in perfection.

I had no sooner begun to eat what was laid before me, than I found the whole company as much astonished as before; it seems I made
 5 no use of my chop-sticks. A grave gentleman, whom I take to be an author, harangued very learnedly (as the company seem'd to think) upon the use which was made of them in China:¹ he entered into a long argument with himself about their first introduction, without once appealing to me, who might be supposed best capable of
 10 silencing the enquiry. As the gentleman therefore took my silence for a mark of his own superior sagacity he was resolved to pursue the triumph: he talked of our cities, mountains, and animals, as familiarly as if he had been born in Quamsi, but as erroneously as if a native of the moon; he attempted to prove that I had nothing of the
 15 true Chinese cut in my visage; shewed that my cheek bones should have been higher, and my forehead broader;² in short, he almost reasoned me out of my country, and effectually persuaded the rest of the company to be of his opinion.

I was going to expose his mistakes, when it was insisted that I
 20 had nothing of the true eastern manner in my delivery. This gentleman's conversation (says one of the ladies, who was a great reader) is like our own, mere chit chat and common sense; there is nothing like sense in the true eastern style, where nothing more is required but sublimity. Oh for an history of Aboulfaouris, the grand
 25 voyager, of genii, magicians, rocks, bags of bullets, giants, and enchanters, where all is great, obscure, magnificent, and unintelligible. I have written many a sheet of eastern tale myself, interrupts the author, and I defy the severest critic to say but that I have stuck close to the true manner. I have compared a lady's chin to the

1 spices] 62; spice PL

4 it seems I] 62; for it seems I had PL

8 first introduction, without] 62; derivation, without ever PL

10 enquiry.] 62; enquiry. I once was going to interpose, but I saw the whole company look disapprobation. PL

17 and effectually] 62; as I found he had effectually PL

23 nothing more] 62; nought else PL

24 the grand] 62; or the grand PL

¹ Du Halde speaks of the Chinese eating with 'Quay-ise, or Chop-sticks' (i. 302).

² A Chinese in the *Lettres chinoises* is greeted with somewhat similar remarks on his arrival in France; see lettre i (i. 4-5). Cf. also Montesquieu's *Lettres persanes*, lettre lxxii (Goldsmith borrowed from this same letter in his own Letter LXXIV).

snow upon the mountains of Bomek; a soldier's sword, to the clouds
 that obscure the face of heaven. If riches are mentioned, I compare
 them to the flocks that graze the verdant Teflis; if poverty, to the
 mists that veil the brow of mount Baku. I have used *thee* and *thou*
 upon all occasions,¹ I have described falling stars, and splitting 5
 mountains, not forgetting the little Houries who make a very pretty
 figure in every description. But you shall hear how I generally begin.
 "Eben-ben-bolo, who was the son of Ban, was born on the foggy
 summits of Benderabassi. His beard was whiter than the feathers
 which veil the breast of the penguin; his eyes were like the eyes of 10
 doves, when wash'd by the dews of the morning; his hair, which
 hung like the willow weeping over the glassy stream, was so beautiful
 that it seem'd to reflect its own brightness; and his feet were as the
 feet of a wild deer which fleeth to the tops of the mountains."²
 There, there, is the true eastern taste for you; every advance made 15
 towards sense, is only a deviation from sound. Eastern tales should
 always be sonorous, lofty, musical and unmeaning.

I could not avoid smiling to hear a native of England attempt to
 instruct me in the true eastern idiom; and, after he had look'd round
 some time for applause, I presumed to ask him whether he had ever 20
 travelled into the east; to which he replied in the negative: I de-
 manded whether he understood Chinese or Arabic, to which also
 he answered as before. Then how, Sir, said I, can you pretend to
 determine upon the eastern stile, who are entirely unacquainted
 with the eastern writings? Take, Sir, the word of one who is *pro-* 25
fessedly a Chinese, and who is *actually* acquainted with the Arabian
 writers, that what is palm'd upon you daily for an imitation of
 eastern writing, no way resembles their manner, either in sentiment
 or diction. In the east, similies are seldom used, and metaphors
 almost wholly unknown; but in China particularly, the very reverse 30
 of what you allude to, takes place; a cool phlegmatic method of

14 the mountains] 62; mountains *PL*

16 sound. Eastern tales] 62; the true idiom, which *PL*

17 musical and] 62; and musically *PL*

20 him] 62; *om. PL*

¹ Cf. Goldsmith's review of *Letters from an Armenian in Ireland, to his Friends at Trebisonde* in the *Monthly Review* for August 1757: '... in vain is every period stiffened with a *thee* and *thou* . . .' (above, I, p. 90).

² Miss Conant, pp. 90-93 of the work cited above, p. 142, discusses 'the pompous language of the East' satirized by Goldsmith.

writing prevails there.¹ The writers of that country, ever more assiduous to instruct than to please, address rather the judgment than the fancy. Unlike many authors of Europe, who have no consideration of the reader's time, they generally leave more to be understood than they express.²

Besides, Sir, you must not expect from an inhabitant of China the same ignorance, the same unlettered simplicity, that you find in a *Turk*, *Persian*, or native of *Peru*. The Chinese are versed in the sciences as well as you, and are masters of several arts unknown to the people of Europe. Many of them are instructed not only in their own national learning, but are perfectly well acquainted with the languages and learning of the west. If my word, in such a case, is not to be taken, consult your own travellers on this head, who affirm, that the scholars of Pekin and Siam sustain theological theses in Latin. *The college of Masprend, which is but a league from Siam* (says one of your travellers*) *came in a body to salute our ambassador. Nothing gave me more sincere pleasure than to behold a number of priests, venerable both from age and modesty, followed by a number of youths of all nations, Chinese, Japonese, Tonquinese, of Cochin China, Pegu and Siam, all willing to pay their respects in the most polite manner imaginable. A Cochin Chinese made an excellent Latin oration upon this occasion: he was succeeded, and even out-done, by a student of Tonquin, who was as well skilled in the western learning as any scholar*

* Journal ou suite du Voyage de Siam en forme de Lettres familières fait en 1685 & 1686, par M. L. D. C. pag. 174, edit. Amstelod. 1686.

1 there. The] 62; there; the *PL*

3 many] 62; the *PL*

16 your] 62; our *PL*

¹ Cf. Goldsmith's review of Murphy's *The Orphan of China* in the *Critical Review* for May 1759: 'Of all nations that ever felt the influence of the inspiring goddess, perhaps the Chinese are to be placed in the lowest class; their productions are the most phlegmatic that can be imagined' (above, I, p. 171).

² In these remarks on Chinese style Goldsmith was apparently not attempting to represent with perfect accuracy the accounts of Chinese writing in the books before him. See Du Halde, i. 365: 'The Style of the *Chinese* in their Compositions is abstruse, concise, allegorical, and sometimes obscure to those who are not well vers'd in the Characters. It requires Skill to make no Mistakes in reading an Author; they say many Things in a few Words; their Expressions are lively, animated, and intermix'd with bold Comparisons, and noble Metaphors.' And cf. Le Comte, i. 303-4: 'Les Chinois sont éloquens par des expressions vives, des métaphores nobles, des comparaisons hardies & peu étendues, & sur tout par une infinité de sentences & de passages tirez des anciens, qui parmi eux sont toujours d'un grand poids: ils disent beaucoup de choses en peu de mots; leur style est serré, mystérieux, obscur, & peu suivi.'

of *Paris*.¹ Now, Sir, if youths, who never stirred from home, are so perfectly skilled in your laws and learning, surely more must be expected from one like me, who have travelled so many thousand miles, who have conversed familiarly for several years with the English factors established at Canton, and the missionaries sent us 5 from every part of Europe.² The unaffected of every country nearly resemble each other, and a page of our Confucius and of your Tillotson³ have scarce any material difference. Paltry affectation, strained allusions, and disgusting finery, are easily attained by those who chuse to wear them; they are but too frequently the badges of 10 ignorance, or of stupidity whenever it would endeavour to please.

I was proceeding in my discourse, when, looking round, I perceived the company no way attentive to what I attempted, with so much earnestness, to enforce. One lady was whispering her that sate next, another was studying the merits of a fan, a third began to 15 yawn, and the author himself fell fast asleep: I thought it, therefore, high time to make a retreat, nor did the company seem to shew any regret at my preparations for departure; even the lady who had invited me, with the most mortifying insensibility, saw me seize my hat and rise from my cushion; nor was I invited to repeat my visit, 20 because it was found that I aimed at appearing rather a reasonable creature, than an outlandish idiot. Adieu.

10 they] 62; for they *PL*

21 rather] 62; only *PL*

22 than] 62; rather than *PL* Following the letter *PL* has a note, om. 62: *¶ A letter, signed D. Z has been received, and the justice of the remarks contained in it are acknowledged; for which the writer has the thanks of the gentleman to whom it was addressed.*

¹ Goldsmith probably found this passage from the Abbé de Choisy's work quoted in the original French in d'Argens's preface to the 1755 edition of the *Lettres chinoises*, 1. xix-xx (the quotation appears in this edition alone). See Phillip Harth in *Notes and Queries*, cxcviii (1953), 529-30.

² A Chinese in the *Lettres chinoises*, lettre vii, speaks of 'la longue fréquentation que j'ai eue avec les Négocians Européens & avec les Missionnaires' (i. 47).

³ In the *Bee* Goldsmith speaks of Tillotson's 'cool phlegmatic manner of enforcing every truth' (above, I, p. 482).

LETTER XXXIV.¹

[Of the present ridiculous passion of the nobility for painting.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

5 **T**HE polite arts are in this country subject to as many revolutions as its laws or politics; not only the objects of fancy and dress, but even of delicacy and taste are directed by the capricious influence of fashion. I am told there has been a time when poetry was universally encouraged by the great, when men of the first rank
10 not only patroniz'd the poet, but produced the finest models for his imitation; it was then that the English sent forth those glowing rhapsodies, which we have so often read over together with rapture; poems big with all the sublimity of Mentius,² and supported by reasoning as strong as that of Zimpo.

15 The nobility are ever fond of wisdom, but they also are fond of having it without study; to read poetry required thought, and the English nobility were not fond of thinking; they soon therefore placed their affections upon music, because in this they might indulge an happy vacancy, and yet still have pretensions to delicacy
20 and taste as before. They soon brought their numerous dependents into an approbation of their pleasures; who in turn led their thousand imitators to feel or feign a similitude of passion. Colonies of singers were now imported from abroad at a vast expence, and it was expected the English would soon be able to set examples to
25 Europe; all these expectations however were soon dissipated;³ in spite of the zeal which fired the great, the ignorant vulgar refused to be taught to sing; refused to undergo the ceremonies which were to initiate them in the singing fraternity; thus the colony from abroad dwindled by degrees; for they were of themselves unfortunately incapable of propagating the breed.

30 Music having thus lost its splendour, Painting is now become the

31 splendour] 62; former splendour *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 6 May 1760.

² 'Mençius, the most famous of the Chinese Philosophers after Confucius, and who liv'd about four hundred Years before the Christian Era' (Du Halde, i. 131).

³ Cf. 'Of the Opera in England' in the *Bee*: 'Some years ago the Italian opera was the only fashionable amusement among our nobility. . . . at present, the house seems deserted, the castrati sing to empty benches . . .' (above, I, pp. 505-6).

sole object of fashionable care;¹ the title of connoisseur in that art is at present the safest passport into every fashionable society; a well timed shrug, an admiring attitude, and one or two exotic tones of exclamation are sufficient qualifications for men of low circumstances to curry favour; even some of the young nobility are themselves early instructed in handling the pencil, while their happy parents, big with expectation, foresee the walls of every apartment covered with the manufactures of their posterity.

But many of the English are not content with giving all their time to this art at home; some young men of distinction are found to travel through Europe with no other intent than that of understanding and collecting pictures; studying seals, and describing statues; on they travel from this cabinet of curiosities to that gallery of pictures, waste the prime of life in wonder, skilful in pictures, ignorant in men; yet impossible to be reclaim'd, because their follies take shelter under the names of delicacy and taste.

It is true, painting should have due encouragement; as the painter can undoubtedly fit up our apartments in a much more elegant manner than the upholsterer; but I should think a man of fashion makes but an indifferent exchange, who lays out all that time in furnishing his house which he should have employed in the furniture of his head; a person who shews no other symptoms of taste than his cabinet or gallery, might as well boast to me of the furniture of his kitchen.

I know no other motive but vanity that induces the great to testify such an inordinate passion for pictures; after the piece is bought, and gazed at eight or ten days successively, the purchaser's pleasure must surely be over; all the satisfaction he can then have, is to shew it to others; he may be considered as the guardian of a treasure of which he makes no manner of use; his gallery is furnished not for himself, but the connoisseur, who is generally some humble flatterer, ready to feign a rapture he does not feel; and as necessary to the happiness of a picture buyer, as gazers are to the magnificence of an Asiatic procession.

¹⁹ upholsterer] 62; upholsterer can *PL*

²³⁻²⁴ the furniture of his kitchen] 62; his dexterity in carving *PL*

³³ gazers] 62; slaves *PL*

¹ Cf. Goldsmith's remark in the *Bee*: 'Our nobility are now more solicitous in patronizing painters and sculptors than those of any other polite profession; and from the lord, who has his gallery, down to the 'prentice, who has his twopenny copper-plate, all are admirers of this art' (above, I, p. 453).

I have enclosed a letter from a youth of distinction, on his travels, to his father in England; in which he appears addicted to no vice, seems obedient to his governor, of a good natural disposition, and fond of improvement; but at the same time early taught to regard
5 cabinets and galleries as the only proper schools of improvement, and to consider a skill in pictures as the properest knowledge for a man of quality.

“My lord, we have been but two days at Antwerp; wherefore I have sat down as soon as possible to give you some account of what
10 we have seen since our arrival, desirous of letting no opportunity pass without writing to so good a father. Immediately upon alighting from our Rotterdam machine, my governor, who is immoderately fond of paintings, and at the same time an excellent judge, would let no time pass till we paid our respects to the church of the virgin-
15 mother, which contains treasure beyond estimation. We took an infinity of pains in knowing its exact dimensions, and differed half a foot in our calculation; so I leave that to some succeeding information. I really believe my governor and I could have lived and died there. There is scarce a pillar in the whole church that is not adorned
20 by a Reubens, a Vander Meuylen, a Vandyke, or a Woverman. What attitudes, carnations, and draperies! I am almost induced to pity the English who have none of those exquisite pieces among them. As we were willing to let slip no opportunity of doing business, we immediately after went to wait on Mr. Hogendorp, whom you have
25 so frequently commended for his judicious collection. His cameas are indeed beyond price; his intaglio’s not so good. He shewed us one of an officiating flamen, which he thought to be an antique; but my governor, who is not to be deceived in these particulars, soon found it to be an arrant *cinqe cento*. I could not, however, sufficiently
30 admire the genius of Mr. Hogendorp, who has been able to collect from all parts of the world a thousand things which no body knows the use of. Except your lordship and my governor, I don’t know any body I admire so much. He is indeed a surprizing genius. The next morning early, as we were resolved to take the whole day before us,

1 enclosed] 62; procured for your amusement PL

6 knowledge] 62; sort of knowledge PL

8 we] PL; We 62, with par.

15 treasure] 62; a treasure PL

15-18 We took . . . succeeding information.] 62; om. PL

32 of. Except] 62; of; except PL don’t] PL; do not 62

33 He is . . . surprizing genius.] 62; om. PL

we sent our compliments to Mr. Van Sprokcken, desiring to see his gallery, which request he very politely complied with. His gallery measures fifty feet by twenty, and is well filled; but what surprized me most of all, was to see an holy family just like your lordship's, which this ingenious gentleman assures me is the true original. I own this gave me inexpressible uneasiness, and I fear it will to your lordship, as I had flattered myself that the only original was in your lordship's possession; I would advise you, however, to take yours down till its merit can be ascertained, my governor assuring me, that he intends to write a long dissertation to prove its originality. One might study in this city for ages, and still find something new: we went from this to view the cardinal's statues, which are really very fine; there were three spintria executed in a very masterly manner, all arm in arm: the torse which I heard you talk so much of is at last discovered to be an Hercules spinning, and not a Cleopatra bathing, as your lordship had conjectured: there has been a treatise written to prove it.

My lord Firmly is certainly a Goth, a Vandal, no taste in the world for painting. I wonder how any call him a man of taste; passing through the streets of Antwerp a few days ago, and observing the nakedness of the inhabitants, he was so barbarous as to observe, that he thought the best method the Flemings could take was to sell their pictures, and buy cloaths. Ah, Coglione! We shall go tomorrow to Mr. Carwarden's cabinet, and the next day we shall see the curiosities collected by Van Ran, and the day after we shall pay a visit to Mount Calvary, and after that—but I find my paper finished; so with the most sincere wishes for your lordship's happiness, and with hopes, after having seen Italy, that centre of pleasure, to return home worthy the care and expence which has been generously laid out in my improvement.

I remain, my Lord,
Yours, &c.

6 and 1] 62; as I *PL*

10 dissertation] 62; treatise *PL*

13 executed] 62; that were executed *PL*

14 in arm] 62; and arm *PL*

15 an] *PL*; a 62

18 lord Firmly] 62; lord *** *PL*

18-19 no taste in the world] 62; has no taste *PL*

23 Coglione! We] 62; Coglione, we *PL*

27 for] *PL*; to 62

LETTER XXXV.¹

[The Philosopher's son describes a lady, his fellow captive.]

From Hingpo, a slave in Persia, to Altangi, a travelling philosopher of China, by the way of Moscow.

5 FORTUNE has made me the slave of another, but nature and inclination render me entirely subservient to you; a tyrant commands my body, but you are master of my heart. And yet let not thy inflexible nature condemn me when I confess that I find my soul shrink with my circumstances. I feel my mind not less than
10 my body, bend beneath the rigours of servitude, the master whom I serve grows every day more formidable. In spite of reason which should teach me to despise him, his hideous image fills even my dreams with horror.

A few days ago a christian slave, who wrought in the gardens
15 happening to enter an arbour where the tyrant was entertaining the ladies of his Haram with coffee, the unhappy captive was instantly stabbed to the heart for his intrusion. I have been preferred to his place, which tho' less laborious than my former station, is yet more ungrateful, as it brings me nearer him whose presence excites sensations at once of disgust and apprehension.
20

Into what a state of misery are the modern Persians fallen! A nation once famous for setting the world an example of freedom, is now become a land of tyrants, and a den of slaves.² The houseless Tartar of Kamkatska, who enjoys his herbs and his fish³ in unmolested freedom, may be envied, if compared to the thousands who
25 pine here in hopeless servitude, and curse the day that gave them being. Is this just dealing, heaven! to render millions wretched to swell up the happiness of a few; cannot the powerful of this earth be happy without our sighs and tears; must every luxury of the great
30 be woven from the calamities of the poor! It must, it must surely be, that this jarring discordant life is but the prelude to some future harmony; the soul attuned to virtue here, shall go from hence to fill up the universal choir where Tien presides in person, where there

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Monday, 12 May 1760.

² Cf. the *Literary Magazine* for 1756 (i. 4), where Jamaica is characterized as 'a place of great wealth and dreadful wickedness, a den of tyrants, and a dungeon of slaves'. See J. W. Oliver, the *Times Literary Supplement*, 18 May 1922, p. 324.

³ Cf. Du Halde, ii. 383: 'In this Country [Kamchatka] there is neither Corn nor Cattle. . . . The Inhabitants live mostly upon Fish, and in Summer they have some Game, also Carrots and Beans.'

shall be no tyrants to frown, no shackles to bind, nor no whips to threaten, where I shall once more meet my father with rapture, and give a loose to filial piety, where I shall hang on his neck, and hear the wisdom of his lips, and thank him for all the happiness to which he has introduced me.

The wretch whom fortune has made my master, has lately purchased several slaves of both sexes; among the rest I hear a christian captive talked of with admiration. The eunuch who bought her, and who is accustomed to survey beauty with indifference, speaks of her with emotion! Her pride, however, astonishes her attendant slaves not less than her beauty; it is reported that she refuses the warmest solicitations of her haughty lord; he has even offered to make her one of his four wives¹ upon changing her religion, and conforming to his. It is probable she cannot refuse such extraordinary offers, and her delay is perhaps intended to enhance her favours.

I have just now seen her, she inadvertently approached the place without a veil, where I sat writing. She seemed to regard the heavens alone with fixed attention; there her most ardent gaze was directed. Genius of the sun! what unexpected softness! what animated grace! her beauty seemed the transparent covering of virtue. Celestial beings could not wear a look of more perfection while sorrow humanized her form, and mixed my admiration with pity. I rose from the bank on which I sat, and she retired; happy that none observed us, for such an interview might have been fatal.

I have regarded till now, the opulence and the power of my tyrant, without envy; I saw him with a mind incapable of enjoying the gifts of fortune, and consequently regarded him as one loaded, rather than enriched with its favours. But at present, when I think, that so much beauty is reserved only for him, that so many charms shall be lavished on a wretch incapable of feeling the greatness of the blessing, I own I feel a reluctance to which I have hitherto been a stranger.

But let not my father impute those uneasy sensations to so trifling

2 I] 62; the son *PL* my] 62; his *PL*

4-5 to which he has introduced me] 62; he enjoys *PL*

15 to] 62; only to *PL*

18 writing] 62; writing to you *PL*

32 to which] 62; *om. PL* stranger] 62; stranger to *PL*

¹ See d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises*, lettre xviii (i. 153): 'Les Persans . . . permettent d'épouser quatre femmes légitimes. . . '

a cause as love. No, never let it be thought that *your* son, and the pupil of the wise Fum Hoam could stoop to so degrading a passion. I am only displeased at seeing so much excellence so unjustly disposed of.

- 5 The uneasiness which I feel is not for myself, but for the beautiful christian. When I reflect on the barbarity of him for whom she is designed, I pity, indeed I pity her. When I think that she must only share one heart, who deserves to command a thousand, excuse me, if I feel an emotion, which universal benevolence extorts from me.
- 10 As I am convinced, that you take a pleasure in those sallies of humanity, and are particularly pleased with compassion, I could not avoid discovering the sensibility with which I felt this beautiful strangers distress. I have for a while forgot in hers, the miseries of my own hopeless situation. Our tyrant grows every day more severe,
- 15 and love which softens all other minds into tenderness, seems only to have encreas'd his severity. Adieu.

LETTER XXXVI.¹

[A continuance of his correspondence. The beautiful captive consents to marry her lord.]

- 20 *From Hingpo, a slave in Persia, to Altangi, a travelling philosopher of China, by the way of Moscow.*

- THE whole haram is filled with a tumultuous joy; Zelis, the beautiful captive, has consented to embrace the religion of Mahomet, and become one of the wives of the fastidious Persian.
- 25 It is impossible to describe the transport that sits on every face on this occasion. Music and feasting fill every apartment; the most miserable slave seems to forget his chains, and sympathizes with the happiness of Mostabad. The herb we tread beneath our feet is not made more for our use, than every slave around him for their im-
- 30 perious master; mere machines of obedience they wait with silent assiduity, feel his pains, and rejoice in his exultation. Heavens! how much is requisite to make one man happy!

Twelve of the most beautiful slaves, and I among the number,

10 that] 62; *om. PL*

11 pleased with] 62; a friend to *PL*

20 *Altangi*] *Fum Hoam PL*

have got orders to prepare for carrying him in triumph to the bridal apartment. The blaze of perfumed torches are to imitate the day; the dancers and singers are hired at a vast expence. The nuptials are to be celebrated on the approaching feast of Baboura, when an hundred taels in gold are to be distributed among the barren wives, 5 in order to pray for fertility from the approaching union.¹

What will not riches procure! an hundred domestics, who curse the tyrant in their souls, are commanded to wear a face of joy, and they are joyful. An hundred flatterers are ordered to attend, and they fill his ears with praise. Beauty, all-commanding beauty, sues for 10 admittance, and scarcely receives an answer; even love itself seems to wait upon fortune, or though the passion be only feigned, yet it wears every appearance of sincerity; and what greater pleasure can even true sincerity confer, or what would the rich have more?

Nothing can exceed the intended magnificence of the bridegroom, 15 but the costly dresses of the bride, six eunuchs in the most sumptuous habits are to conduct him to the nuptial couch, and await his orders. Six ladies, in all the magnificence of Persia, are directed to undress the bride. Their business is to assist to encourage her, to divest her of every encumbering part of her dress, all but the last covering,² which, by an artful complication of ribbons, is purposely 20 made difficult to unloose, and with which she is to part reluctantly even to the joyful possessor of her beauty.

Mostadad, O my father is no philosopher; and yet he seems perfectly contented with his ignorance. Possessed of numberless slaves, 25 camels, and women, he desires no greater possession. He has never opened the page of Mentius, and yet all the slaves tell me that he is happy.

Forgive the weakness of my nature, if I some times feel my heart rebellious to the dictates of wisdom, and eager for happiness like his. 30

14 confer, or . . . have more?] 62; confer! *PL*

17 await] *PL*; wait 62

¹ See d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises*, lettre xlv (ii. 148): 'Une des principales solennités des Persans, c'est le *Baboura*, ou la *fête des femmes stériles*: on la nomme ainsi, parce que celles qui ne peuvent avoir des enfans, vont demander l'aumône dans les rues, couvertes de leurs voiles.'

² Chardin, whose *Travels* Goldsmith quotes in Letter CXV, gives a somewhat similar account: 'About an Hour after she [the bride] has been at her Husbands House, the Nuptial Feast being over, the Matrons carry her into the Bridal Chamber, uncloath her to a little Waste-Coat, and a thin pair of Drawers next to it, and put her to Bed' (*The Travels of Sir John Chardin into Persia and the East-Indies* [1686], p. 263).

Yet why wish for his wealth with his ignorance; to be like him, incapable of sentimental pleasures; incapable of feeling the happiness of making others happy, incapable of teaching the beautiful Zelis philosophy.

- 5 What, shall I in a transport of passion give up the golden mean, the universal harmony, the unchanging essence for the possession of an hundred camels; as many slaves, thirty-five beautiful horses, and seventy-three fine women: first blast me to the centre! Degrade me beneath the most degraded! Pare my nails ye powers of heaven!
 10 ere I would stoop to such an exchange. What, part with philosophy, which teaches me to suppress my passions instead of gratifying them, which teaches me even to divest my soul of passion, which teaches serenity in the midst of tortures; philosophy, by which even now I am so very serene, and so very much at ease, to be persuaded
 15 to part with it for any other enjoyment! Never, never, even though persuasion spoke in the accents of Zelis!

- A female slave informs me that the bride is to be arrayed in a tissue of silver, and her hair adorned with the largest pearls of Ormus;¹ but why teize you with particulars, in which we are both
 20 so little concerned; the pain I feel in separation throws a gloom over my mind, which in this scene of universal joy I fear may be attributed to some other cause: how wretched are those who are like me, denied even the last resource of misery, their tears. Adieu.

LETTER XXXVII.²

- 25 [The correspondence still continued. He begins to be disgusted in the pursuit of his wisdom. An allegory, to prove its futility.]

From Hingpo, a slave in Persia, to Lien Chi Altangi, a travelling philosopher of China, by the way of Moscom.

- 30 I Begin to have doubts whether wisdom be alone sufficient to make us happy. Whether every step we make in refinement is not an inlet into new disquietudes. A mind too vigorous and active,

¹ ignorance;] 62; ignorance PL

¹⁹ are both] PL; both are 62

¹ See Emanuel Bowen, *A Complete System of Geography* (1747), ii. 211: 'The Island of ORMUS is . . . almost at the Mouth of the Persian Gulph. . . . The Island of Bahara, or Baharen, lies . . . in the Midway between Basra, or Bassora and Ormus. The largest, brightest, roundest, and truest *Oriental* Pearls, are found there.'

² In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 16 May 1760.

serves only to consume the body to which it is joined, as the richest jewels are soonest found to wear their settings.

When we rise in knowledge as the prospect widens, the objects of our regard become more obscure, and the unlettered peasant, whose views are only directed to the narrow sphere around him, 5 beholds nature with a finer relish, and tastes her blessings with a keener appetite than the philosopher, whose mind attempts to grasp an universal system.

As I was some days ago pursuing this subject among a circle of my fellow slaves, an ancient Guebre of the number, equally remarkable for his piety and wisdom,¹ seemed touched with my conversation, and desired to illustrate what I had been saying with an allegory taken from the Zindavesta of Zoroaster; by this we shall be taught, says he, that they who travel in pursuit of wisdom, walk only in a circle; and after all their labour, at last return to their pristine 15 ignorance; and in this also we shall see that enthusiastic confidence, or unsatisfying doubts terminate all our enquiries.

In early times, before myriads of nations covered the earth, the whole human race lived together in one valley. The simple inhabitants, surrounded on every side by lofty mountains, knew no other 20 world but the little spot to which they were confined. They fancied the heavens bent down to meet the mountain tops, and formed an impenetrable wall to surround them. None had ever yet ventured to climb the steepy cliff, in order to explore those regions that lay beyond it; they knew the nature of the skies only from a tradition 25 which mentioned their being made of adamant; traditions make up the reasonings of the simple, and serve to silence every enquiry.

In this sequestered vale, bless'd with all the spontaneous productions of nature, the honey'd blossom, the refreshing breeze, the gliding brook, and golden fruitage, the simple inhabitants seemed 30 happy in themselves, in each other; they desired no greater pleasures, for they knew of none greater; ambition, pride and envy were vices

29 nature] 62; nature, the gliding brook *PL* the refreshing breeze,] 62; refreshing breezes *PL*

29-30 the gliding brook,] 62; *om. PL*

¹ D'Argens in the *Lettres chinoises* devotes considerable space to the Persian religious sect called the Guebres, and in lettre cx he gives an account of their virtues (see particularly iv. 202-3).

unknown among them; and from this peculiar simplicity of its possessors, the country was called *the valley of ignorance*.¹

At length however, an unhappy youth, more aspiring than the rest undertook to climb the mountain's side, and examine the summits
 5 which were hitherto deemed inaccessible. The inhabitants from below, gazed with wonder at his intrepidity, some applauded his courage, others censured his folly, still however he proceeded towards the place where the earth and heavens seemed to unite, and at length arrived at the wished for height with extreme labour and
 10 assiduity.

His first surprize was to find the skies, not as he expected within his reach, but still as far off as before; his amazement encreased when he saw a wide extended region lying on the opposite side of the mountain, but it rose to astonishment when he beheld a country
 15 at a distance more beautiful and alluring than even that he had just left behind.

As he continued to gaze with wonder, a genius, with a look of infinite modesty, approaching, offered to be his guide and instructor. The distant country which you so much admire, says the angelic
 20 being, is called *the Land of Certainty*, in that charming retreat, sentiment contributes to refine every sensual banquet; the inhabitants are blessed with every solid enjoyment, and still more blessed in a perfect consciousness of their own felicity: ignorance in that country is wholly unknown, all there is satisfaction without alloy, for
 25 every pleasure first undergoes the examination of reason. As for me I am called the genius of *Demonstration*, and am stationed here in order to conduct every adventurer to that land of happiness thro' those intervening regions you see over hung with fogs and darkness, and horrid with forests, cataracts, caverns, and various other shapes
 30 of danger. But follow me, and in time I may lead you to that distant desirable land of tranquility.

The intrepid traveller immediately put himself under the direction of the genius, and both journeying on together with a slow but agreeable pace, deceived the tediousness of the way by conversation. The
 35 beginning of the journey seem'd to promise true satisfaction, but as

25 reason] 62; truth PL

28 you] 62; which you PL

29 and various] 62; with various PL

¹ The resemblance of the Valley of Ignorance to the Happy Valley in Johnson's *Rasselas* (1759) has frequently been noticed.

they proceeded forward, the skies became more gloomy and the way more intricate, they often inadvertently approached the brow of some frightful precipice, or the brink of a torrent, and were obliged to measure back their former way, the gloom encreasing as they proceeded, their pace became more slow; they paused at every step, 5 frequently stumbled, and their distrust and timidity encreased. The genius of Demonstration, now, therefore advised his pupil to grope upon hands and feet, as a method though more slow, yet less liable to error.

In this manner they attempted to pursue their journey for some 10 time, when they were overtaken by another genius, who, with a precipitate pace seem'd travelling the same way. He was instantly known by the other to be the *genius of Probability*. He wore two wide extended wings at his back, which incessantly waved, without in- 15 creasing the rapidity of his motion; his countenance betrayed a confidence that the ignorant might mistake for sincerity, and he had but one eye, which was fixed in the middle of his forehead.

Servant of Hormizda,¹ cried he, approaching the mortal pilgrim, if thou art travelling to the *Land of Certainty*, how is it possible to arrive there under the guidance of a genius, who proceeds forward 20 so slowly, and is so little acquainted with the way; follow me, we shall soon perform the journey to where every pleasure awaits our arrival.

The peremptory tone in which this genius spoke, and the speed with which he moved forward, induced the traveller to change his 25 conductor, and leaving his modest companion behind, he proceeded forward with his more confident director, seeming not a little pleased at the encreased velocity of his motion.

But soon he found reasons to repent. Whenever a torrent crossed their way, his guide taught him to despise the obstacle by plunging 30 him in; whenever a precipice presented, he was directed to fling

6 stumbled] 62; were seen to slip PL

7 of Demonstration] 62; om. PL

8 method] 62; way PL

13 *Probability*] 62; *Presumption* PL

22 journey to] 62; journey, and be found PL

24 this] 62; the PL

¹ See *Lettres chinoises*, lettre ciii (iv. 128-9): '... Zoroastre admit le dogme de deux principes éternels, l'un bon, l'autre mauvais. Les Perses donnerent au Dieu bon le nom d'*Hormizda*, . . . & au mauvais Dieu celui d'*Ahariman*, que les Grecs changerent en *Arimanès*.'

himself forward. Thus each moment miraculously escaping, his repeated escapes only served to encrease his guides temerity. He led him therefore forward, amidst infinite difficulties, till they arrived at the borders of an ocean which appeared unnavigable from the
 5 black mists that lay upon its surface. It's unquiet waves were of the darkest hue, and gave a lively representation of the various agitations of the human mind.

The genius of Probability now confessed his temerity, own'd his being an improper guide to the *Land of Certainty*, a country where
 10 no mortal had ever been permitted to arrive; but at the same time offered to supply the traveller with another conductor, who should carry him to *the Land of Confidence*, a region where the inhabitants lived with the utmost tranquility, and tasted almost as much satisfaction as if in the Land of Certainty. Not waiting for a reply, he
 15 stamp'd three times on the ground, and called forth *the Dæmon of Error*, a gloomy fiend of the servants of Arimanes.¹ The yawning earth gave up the reluctant savage, who seemed unable to bear the light of the day. His stature was enormous, his colour black and hideous, his aspect betrayed a thousand varying passions, and he
 20 spread forth pinions that were fitted for the most rapid flight. The traveller at first was shocked at the spectre; but finding him obedient to superior power, he assumed his former tranquility.

I have called you to duty, cries the genius to the dæmon, to bear on your back a son of mortality over *the Ocean of Doubts* into the
 25 *Land of Confidence*: I expect you'll perform your commission with punctuality. And as for you, continued the genius, addressing the traveller, when once I have bound this fillet round your eyes, let no voice of persuasion, nor threats the most terrifying, persuade you to unbind it in order to look round; keep the fillet fast, look not at
 30 the ocean below, and you may certainly expect to arrive at a region of pleasure.

Thus saying, and the traveller's eyes being covered, the dæmon muttering curses raised him on his back, and instantly up-borne by his strong pinions, directed his flight among the clouds. Neither the

5 its] 62; the *PL*

8 Probability] 62; Presumption *PL*

12 a region] 62; *om. PL*

13-14 tranquility, and . . . of Certainty] 62; tranquility and satisfaction *PL*

30 a region] 62; the region *PL*

¹ See the note on Hormizda, p. 159.

loudest thunder, nor the most angry tempest, could persuade the traveller to unbind his eyes. The dæmon directed his flight downwards, and skimmed the surface of the ocean; a thousand voices, some with loud invective, others in the sarcastic tones of contempt, vainly endeavoured to persuade him to look round; but he still continued to keep his eyes covered, and would in all probability have arrived at the happy land, had not flattery effected what other means could not perform. For now he heard himself welcomed on every side to the promised land, and an universal shout of joy was sent forth at his safe arrival; the wearied traveller, desirous of seeing the long wished-for country, at length pulled the fillet from his eyes, and ventured to look round him. But he had unloosed the band too soon; he was not yet above half way over. The dæmon, who was still hovering in the air, and had produced those sounds only in order to deceive, was now freed from his commission; wherefore, throwing the astonished traveller from his back, the unhappy youth fell headlong into the subjacent Ocean of Doubts, from whence he never after was seen to rise.

LETTER XXXVIII.¹

[The Chinese philosopher praises the justice of a late sentence, and instances the injustice of the king of France, in the case of the prince of Charolais.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

WHEN Parmenio, the Grecian, had done something which excited an universal shout from the surrounding multitude, he was instantly struck with the doubt, that what had their approbation must certainly be wrong; and, turning to a philosopher who

² The dæmon] 62; Wherefore the dæmon now PL

⁴ contempt] 62; wit PL

⁵ but] 62; om. PL

⁹ and] 62; om. PL was] 62; seem'd PL

¹⁷ Ocean of Doubts] 62; ocean PL

¹⁸ rise.] PL has an additional par., om. 62: The Zendavesta observes, that had he, without attempting to survey the Ocean of Doubts, held fast to the genius of Error, he would have been carried to the Land of Confidence, which is but another name for the Valley of Ignorance from whence he had travelled.

²⁶ the doubt] 62; a doubt PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Monday, 19 May 1760.

stood near him, *Pray sir, says he, pardon me; I fear I have been guilty of some absurdity.*¹

You know that I am not less than him a despiser of the multitude; you know that I equally detest flattery to the great; yet so many
5 circumstances have concurred to give a lustre to the latter part of the present English monarch's reign, that I cannot withhold my contribution of praise; I cannot avoid acknowledging the crowd for once just in their unanimous approbation.

Yet think not that battles gained, dominion extended, or enemies
10 brought to submission, are the virtues which at present claim my admiration. Were the reigning monarch only famous for his victories, I should regard his character with indifference; the boast of heroism in this enlightened age is justly regarded as a qualification of a very subordinate rank, and mankind now begin to look with becoming
15 horror on these foes to man; the virtue in this aged monarch which I have at present in view, is one of a much more exalted nature, is one the most difficult of attainment, is the least praised of all kingly virtues, and yet deserves the greatest praise; the virtue I mean is JUSTICE; a strict administration of justice, without severity and
20 without favour.

Of all virtues this is the most difficult to be practised by a king who has a power to pardon. All men, even tyrants themselves, lean to mercy when unbiassed by passions or interest, the heart naturally persuades to forgiveness, and pursuing the dictates of this pleasing
25 deceiver, we are led to prefer our private satisfaction to public utility; what a thorough love for the public, what a strong command over the passions, what a finely conducted judgment must he possess who opposes the dictates of reason to those of his heart, and prefers the future interest of his people to his own immediate satisfaction.
30 If still to a man's own natural bias for tenderness, we add the numerous solicitations made by a criminal's friends for mercy; if we survey a king not only opposing his own feelings, but reluctantly

3 You know] 62; You know me, *PL*

4 flattery to] 62; flattery addressed to *PL*

7 acknowledging] *PL*; the acknowledging 62

11 admiration. Were] 62; admiration, were *PL*

14 rank] 62; nature *PL*

17 one the] *PL*; one of the 62

30 for] 62; in favour of *PL*

¹ This story is elsewhere told of Phocion. See Plutarch, *Life of Phocion* viii. 4 (745C), and pseudo-Plutarch, *Apophthegmata of Kings and Generals* Phocion No. 4 (188A).

refusing those he regards, and this to satisfy the public, whose cries he may never hear, whose gratitude he may never receive: this surely is true greatness! Let us fancy ourselves for a moment in this just old man's place, surrounded by numbers, all soliciting the same favour, a favour that nature disposes us to grant, where the induce- 5 ments to pity are laid before us in the strongest light, suppliants at our feet, some ready to resent a refusal, none opposing a compliance; let us, I say, suppose ourselves in such a situation, and I fancy we should find ourselves more apt to act the character of good natured men than of upright magistrates. 10

What contributes to raise justice above all other kingly virtues is, that it is seldom attended with a due share of applause, and those who practise it must be influenced by greater motives than empty fame; the people are generally well pleased with a remission of punishment, and all that wears the appearance of humanity; it is the 15 wise alone who are capable of discerning that impartial justice is the truest mercy: they know it to be difficult, very difficult at once to compassionate, and yet condemn an object that pleads for tenderness.

I have been led into this common place train of thought by a late striking instance in this country, of the impartiality of justice, and 20 of the king's inflexible resolution of inflicting punishment where it was justly due. A man of the first quality in a fit either of passion, melancholy, or madness murdered his servant, it was expected that his station in life would have lessened the ignominy of his punishment; however, he was arraigned, condemned, and underwent the 25 same degrading death with the meanest malefactor.¹ It was well

12-14 applause, and . . . empty fame] 62; applause *PL*

14 with] 62; *om. PL*

22 was] 62; is *PL*

23 that] 62; *om. PL*

25 arraigned,] 62; arraigned and *PL*

¹ One of the sensations of London during the early months of 1760 was the trial and execution of Laurence Shirley, fourth Earl Ferrers, for the murder of his steward. He was apprehended immediately after the murder on 18 January, tried by his peers in Westminster Hall 16 April and the following days, sentenced to be hanged, and executed at Tyburn 5 May. Readers of the *Public Ledger* had an opportunity to know all about the curious affair, for between 24 January and 16 May the paper ran at least twenty articles giving details of or reflections on the case.

In the *Public Ledger* for 8 May had appeared a paragraph making about the same points that Goldsmith was to make a week and a half later in this letter: 'The execution of the unfortunate lord Ferrers does great honour to this kingdom in respect to the impartial administration of its justice. In many other countries murder is too frequently committed with impunity, especially when the assassin happens to be rich or ennobled;

considered that virtue alone is true nobility; and that he whose actions sink him even beneath the vulgar, has no right to those distinctions which should be the rewards only of merit; it was perhaps considered that crimes were more heinous among the higher classes
 5 of people, as necessity exposes them to fewer temptations.

Over all the east, even China not excepted; a person of the same quality guilty of such a crime, might, by giving up a share of his fortune to the judge buy off his sentence;¹ there are several countries even in Europe, where the servant is entirely the property of his
 10 master; if a slave kills his lord, he dies by the most excruciating tortures; but if the circumstances are reversed, a small fine buys off the punishment of the offender. Happy the country where all are equal, and where those who sit as judges have too much integrity to

3 rewards] 62; reward PL

9-10 his master] 62; the master PL

and in many parts of Europe, although murder is not directly privileged, yet it is often connived at, even in nations that deem themselves under the government of equitable and polite laws.'

This seemingly innocent paragraph displeased at least one of its readers, and he expressed himself at some length in a letter signed Anglo Britanus in *Read's Weekly Journal* for 17 May. In the first part of the letter he belabours those who place any extraordinary value on the administration of justice in the Ferrers case; his remarks here, though they apply to the anonymous paragraph in the *Public Ledger*, do not seem to be aimed directly at it. But in what follows Anglo Britanus is unmistakably attacking what the anonymous writer had said in the last sentence of his article: 'The public has been told, in one of our news papers, that in many other countries of Europe, murder, tho' not directly privileged, is connived at, in the great. It is pity the writer did not particularize those parts of Europe he meant to stigmatize with this reproach. I have been in most, and know of none where murder is connived at, either by the legislature or the magistracy.'

This Chinese letter by Goldsmith appeared just two days later, and it seems probable that it was written as an answer to Anglo Britanus in defence of the earlier writer in the *Public Ledger*. In answer to the first part of the letter in *Read's Weekly Journal* Goldsmith merely reaffirms that the affair is a 'striking instance in this country, of the impartiality of justice' and maintains that the king deserves praise for being just rather than merciful. But Anglo Britanus had expressed doubts that murder was connived at outside of England and had asked for a particularization of countries. Goldsmith's first answer to this (possibly invented for the occasion), that in China a person of quality might bribe the judge, is not a good one, for Anglo Britanus had limited the discussion to countries in Europe. And his second answer, that in 'several countries even in Europe' a master had to pay only a small fine for killing his servant, is little better, for no country is named. But at the end of the letter he tells of the three murders committed by the Prince of Charolais and his three pardons by the king, and here Goldsmith gives a real reply to Anglo Britanus. (See Friedman, *Philological Quarterly*, xvii [1938], 82-84.)

¹ Although Du Halde says that mandarins sometimes 'sacrifice the most sacred Laws of Reason and Justice to their private Interests' (i. 257), yet he insists that 'Criminals are severely punish'd, and the Penalty proportion'd to the Enormity of the Crimes' (i. 310).

receive a bribe, and too much honour to pity from a similitude of the prisoners title or circumstances with their own. Such is England, yet think not that it was always equally famed for this strict impartiality. There was a time even here when titles softened the rigours of the law, when dignified wretches were suffered to live, and
5 continue for years an equal disgrace to justice and nobility.

To this day in a neighbouring country, the great are often most scandalously pardoned for the most scandalous offences. A person is still alive among them¹ who has more than once deserved the most ignominious severity of justice. His being of the blood royal, how-
10 ever was thought a sufficient atonement for his being a disgrace to humanity. This remarkable personage took pleasure in shooting at the passengers below, from the top of his palace; and in this most princely amusement he usually spent some time every day. He was at length arraigned by the friends of a person whom in this manner
15 he had killed, was found guilty of the charge and condemned to die. His merciful monarch pardoned him in consideration of his rank and quality. The unrepenting criminal soon after renewed his usual entertainment, and in the same manner killed another man. He was a second time condemned; and strange to think a second time re-
20 ceived his majesty's pardon! Would you believe it? A third time the very same man was guilty of the very same offence; a third time therefore the laws of his country found him guilty—I wish for the honour of humanity I could suppress the rest.—A third time he was
25 pardoned. Will you not think such a story too extraordinary for belief, will you not think me describing the savage inhabitants of Congo; alas, the story is but too true, and the country where it was transacted, regards itself as the politest in Europe! Adieu.

6 nobility] 62; to nobility *PL*

24 A] 62; But a *PL*

28 in] 62; of *PL*

¹ The person is identified as 'the prince of Charolais' only in the Table of Contents in 1762. He died about two months after the first appearance of this letter; see the *London Evening-Post* for 2-5 August 1760: 'The Count de Charolois, who died in Paris the 23d of last Month in the 61st Year of his Age, had been extremely wanton and passionate in his Youth, and guilty of several Murders without the least Provocation. They now observe of him in Letters from Paris, that in his riper Years he became as affable and beneficent as he had been hasty and tyrannical. . . .'

LETTER XXXIX.¹

[The description of true politeness. Two letters of different countries, by ladies falsely thought polite at home.]

*From Lien Chi Altangi to ***** merchant in Amsterdam.*

5 CEREMONIES are different in every country, but true politeness is every where the same. Ceremonies, which take up so much of our attention, are only artificial helps which ignorance assumes, in order to imitate politeness, which is the result of good sense and good nature.² A person possessed of those qualities, though
10 he had never seen a court, is truly agreeable; and if without them, would continue a clown, though he had been all his life a gentleman usher.

How would a Chinese, bred up in the formalities of an eastern court, be regarded, should he carry all his good manners beyond the
15 Great Wall? How would an Englishman, skilled in all the decorums of western good breeding, appear at an eastern entertainment? Would he not be reckoned more fantastically savage than even his unbred footman!

Ceremony resembles that base coin which circulates through a
20 country by the royal mandate; it serves every purpose of real money at home, but is entirely useless if carried abroad; a person who should attempt to circulate his native trash in another country, would be thought either ridiculous or culpable. He is truly well bred who knows when to value and when to despise those national
25 peculiarities which are regarded by some with so much observance; a traveller of taste at once perceives that the wise are polite all the world over; but that fools are polite only at home.

I have now before me two very fashionable letters upon the same subject, both written by ladies of distinction; one of whom leads the
30 fashion in England, and the other sets the ceremonies of China: they are both regarded in their respective countries by all the beau monde, as standards of taste, and models of true politeness, and both give us a true idea of what they imagine elegant in their admirers; which of

33 a true] 62; an *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 23 May 1760.

² In the distinction between true politeness and ceremonies in the opening paragraphs of this letter Goldsmith may have been influenced by Justus Van Effen's distinction between 'la Politesse générale & raisonnée' and 'la Politesse particulière de chaque Pais', in *Le Misanthrope*, Discours XLVIII (La Haye, 1726), ii. 59. Goldsmith had made extensive borrowings from this work a few months earlier in writing the *Bee*.

them understands true politeness, or whether either, you shall be at liberty to determine: the English lady writes thus to her female confidant.

AS I live, my dear Charlotte, I believe the colonel will carry it at last; he is a most irresistible fellow, that's flat. So well 5 dress'd, so neat, so sprightly, and plays about one so agreeably, that I vow, he has as much spirits as the marquis of Monkeyman's Italian greyhound. I first saw him at Ranelagh; he shines there; he's nothing without Ranelagh, and Ranelagh nothing without him. The next day he sent a card, and compliments, desiring to wait on 10 mamma and me to the music subscription. He looked all the time with such irresistible impudence, that positively he had something in his face gave me as much pleasure as a pair-royal of naturals¹ in my own hand. He waited on mamma and me the next morning to know how we got home: you must know the insidious devil makes 15 love to us both. Rap went the footman at the door; bounce went my heart; I thought he would have rattled the house down. Chariot drove up to the window, with his footmen in the prettiest liveries: he has infinite taste, that's flat. Mamma had spent all the morning at her head; but for my part, I was in an undress to receive him; 20 quite easy, mind that; no way disturbed at his approach: mamma pretended to be as degagée as I, and yet I saw her blush in spite of her. Positively he is a most killing devil! We did nothing but laugh all the time he staid with us; I never heard so many very good things before: at first he mistook mamma for my sister; at which she 25 laughed: then he mistook my natural complexion for paint; at which I laugh'd: and then he shewed us a picture in the lid of his snuff-box, at which we all laughed. He plays picquet so very ill, and is so very fond of cards, and loses with such a grace, that positively he has won me; I have got a cool hundred, but have lost my heart. I need not 30 tell you that he is only a colonel of the train-bands.

I am, dear Charlotte,
Yours for ever,
BELINDA.

The Chinese lady addresses her confidant, a poor relation of the 35

¹ understands] 62; understand *PL*

30 have lost] 62; lost *PL*

¹ 'A point in the game of basset' (Dobson).

family, upon the same occasion; in which she seems to understand decorums even better than the western beauty. You who have resided so long in China will readily acknowledge the picture to be taken from nature; and, by being acquainted with the Chinese
 5 customs, will better apprehend the lady's meaning.

From YAOUA to YAYA.

PAPPA insists upon one, two, three, four hundred taals from the colonel my lover, before he parts with a lock of my hair. Ho, how I wish the dear creature may be able to produce the money,
 10 and pay pappa my fortune.¹ The colonel is reckoned the politest man in all Shensi. The first visit he paid at our house; mercy, what stooping, and cringing, and stopping, and fidgeting, and going back, and creeping forward, there was between him and pappa, one would have thought he had got the seventeen books of ceremonies all by
 15 heart. When he was come into the hall he flourished his hands three times in a very graceful manner.² Pappa, who would not be outdone, flourished his four times; upon this the colonel began again, and both thus continued flourishing for some minutes in the politest manner imaginable. I was posted in the usual place behind the
 20 screen, where I saw the whole ceremony through a slit.³ Of this the colonel was sensible, for pappa informed him. I would have given the world to have shewn him my little shoes, but had no opportunity. It was the first time I had ever the happiness of seeing any man but pappa, and I vow, my dear Yaya, I thought my three souls
 25 would actually have fled from my lips. Ho, but he looked most charmingly, he is reckoned the best shaped man in the whole
 22 him] 62; *om. PL*

¹ See Du Halde, i. 303: '... the Inclinations of the Children are never consulted in Matrimony, the Choice of a Wife belonging to the Father or the nearest Relation of him that is to be marry'd; who makes the Match either with the Father, or Relations of the Maiden, paying a certain Sum to them (for in *China* the Daughters have no Fortunes) which is laid out in new Cloaths and other things for the Bride. . . .'

² *Ibid.*, p. 293: 'The common way of Saluting, is to clap the Hands together before the Breast, moving them in an affected Manner, and to bow the Head a very little. . . . When they meet a Person to whom they ought to pay greater Deference, after joining their Hands, they first lift them up, and then let them fall almost to the Earth, bowing their Body very low at the same time.'

³ *Ibid.* ii. 45: 'Formerly, (what is very remarkable) when a Father had once cast his Eyes upon a Son-in-law, the Daughter was allowed to see him for the first time in the Hall of the Guests, thro' a little Hole in a Screen plac'd before the Door of the inner Apartment.'

province, for he is very fat,¹ and very short; but even those natural advantages are improved by his dress, which is fashionable past description. His head was close shaved, all but the crown, and the hair of that was braided into a most beautiful tail,² that reaching down to his heels, was terminated by a bunch of yellow roses. Upon his first entering the room, I could easily perceive he had been highly perfumed with *assa foetida*. But then his looks, his looks, my dear Yaya, were irresistible. He kept his eyes stedfastly fixed on the wall during the whole ceremony, and I sincerely believe no accident could have discomposed his gravity, or drawn his eyes away. After a polite silence of two hours, he gallantly begged to have the singing women introduced, purely for my amusement. After one of them had for some time entertained us with her voice, the colonel and she retired for some minutes together. I thought they would never have come back; I must own he is a most agreeable creature. Upon his return, they again renewed the concert, and he continued to gaze upon the wall as usual, when, in less than half an hour more; ho, but he retired out of the room with another. He is indeed a most agreeable creature.

When he came to take his leave, the whole ceremony began afresh, pappa would see him to the door, but the colonel swore he would rather see the earth turned up side down than permit him to stir a single step, and pappa was at last obliged to comply. As soon as he was got to the door pappa went out to see him on horseback, here they continued half an hour bowing and cringing, before one would mount or the other go in, but the colonel was at last victorious. He had scarce gone an hundred paces from the house when pappa running out halloo'd after him, A good journey. Upon which the colonel returned, and would see pappa into his house before ever he would depart. He was no sooner got home than he sent me a very fine present of duck eggs painted twenty different colours. His generosity I own has won me. I have ever since been trying over the eight letters of good fortune,³ and have great hopes. All I have to

³ shaved] *PL*; shaven 62

³⁰ twenty] *PL*; of twenty 62

¹ *Ibid.* i. 281: '... they think a Man well made, when he is large and fat, and fills his Chair with a good Grace.'

² *Ibid.*, p. 282: '... at present they [Chinese men] let Hair enough grow on the hind part or Top of the Head, to braid into Tresses.'

³ *Ibid.* ii. 45: 'In the Choice [of couples for marriage], it [formerly] was not looked upon as a capital Point to consult the eight Letters of Good Luck, to determine the Fate of the Parties. . . .'

apprehend is that after he has married me, and that I am carried to his house close shut up in my chair, when he comes to have the first sight of my face, he may shut me up a second time and send me back to pappā.¹ However, I shall appear as fine as possible;
 5 Mamma and I have been to buy the cloaths for my wedding. I am to have a new *fong whang* in my hair, the beak of which will reach down to my nose;² the millener from whom we bought that and our ribbons cheated us as if she had no conscience, and so to quiet mine I cheated her. All this is fair you know. I remain, my dear Yaya,
 10 Your ever faithful,
 YAOUA.

LETTER XL.³

[The English still have poets, tho' not versifiers.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial
 15 Academy at Pekin, in China.

YOU have always testified the highest esteem for the English poets, and thought them not inferior to the Greeks, Romans, or even the Chinese in the art. But it is now thought even by the English themselves that the race of their poets is extinct, every day
 20 produces some pathetic exclamation upon the decadence of taste and genius. Pegasus, say they, has slipped the bridle from his mouth, and our modern bards attempt to direct his flight by catching him by the tail.

9 her. All] 62; her by stealing ten yards of ribbon more than my due; all PL
 18 the art] 62; their art PL

¹ Cf. the account of Chinese marriages in d'Argens's *Letters chinoises*, lettre xlii (ii. 116): 'Lorsque tout est conclu entre les deux familles, on mène la fiancée dans une chaise fermée à la maison de son futur époux, qui l'attend à la porte. Il ouvre la chaise, & voit si on lui a dit la vérité sur le compte de son épouse: il reconnoît quelquefois, mais trop tard, qu'on l'a cruellement abusé; il ne lui reste alors que deux partis à prendre, également fâcheux? Le premier, de renvoyer sa fiancée chez elle & de retirer sa parole. . . .' See also Le Comte, ii. 50.

² See Du Halde, i. 282: 'Some [Chinese women] adorn their Heads with the Figure of a *Fong-whang*, a fabulous Bird, of which the Ancients speak many mysterious things. It is made of Copper or Silver, gilt, according to the Quality of the Person; its Wings are stretch'd gently over the fore part of their Head-dress, and embrace the upper part of their Temples. Its long spreading Tail makes a sort of Plume on the Top of the Head; the Body is placed over the Forehead; the Neck and Beak hang down upon the Nose. . . .'

³ In the *Public Ledger* for Monday, 26 May 1760.

Yet, my Friend, it is only among the ignorant that such discourses prevail, men of true discernment can see several poets still among the English, some of whom equal if not surpass their predecessors. The ignorant term that alone poetry which is couch'd in a certain number of syllables in every line, where a vapid thought is drawn 5 out into a number of verses of equal length, and perhaps pointed with rhymes at the end. But glowing sentiment, striking imagery, concise expression, natural description, and modulated periods are full sufficient entirely to fill up my idea of this art, and make way to every passion. 10

If my idea of poetry therefore be just, the English are not at present so destitute of poetical merit as they seem to imagine. I can see several poets in disguise among them; men furnished with that strength of soul, sublimity of sentiment, and grandeur of expression, which constitutes the character. Many of the writers of their modern 15 odes, sonnets, tragedies or rebusses, it is true, deserve not the name, tho' they have done nothing but clink rhymes and measure syllables for years together; their Johnson's and Smollet's are truly poets; though for aught I know they never made a single verse in their whole lives. 20

In every incipient language the poet and the prose writer are very distinct in their qualifications; the poet ever proceeds first, treading unbeaten paths, enriching his native funds, and employed in new adventures. The other follows with more cautious steps, and though slow in his motions, treasures up every useful or pleasing discovery.¹ 25 But when once all the extent and the force of the language is known,

4 that alone] 62; all that *PL*

7 end. But] 62; end; but my conception of poetry is very different, *PL*

8-9 are full sufficient] 62; seem *PL*

10 passion] 62; passion of my soul *PL*

11 therefore] 62; *om. PL*

18 and Smollet's] 62; or Smollet's *PL*

22 qualifications;] 62; qualifications; but when once the language is perfectly formed, they become one and the same. In the beginning *PL* ever proceeds first] 62; always proceeds forward *PL*

24 adventures] 62; adventure *PL*

¹ Cf. the discussion in the *Enquiry*: 'It was the poet, who harmonized the ungrateful accents of his native dialect, who lifted it above common conversation, and shaped its rude combinations into order. From him the orator formed a stile, and though poetry first rose out of prose, in turn, it gave birth to every prosaic excellence. Musical period, concise expression, and delicacy of sentiment, were all excellencies derived from the poet; in short, he not only preceded, but formed the orator, philosopher, and historian' (above, I, pp. 263-4).

the poet then seems to rest from his labour, and is at length overtaken by his assiduous pursuer. Both characters are then blended into one, the historian and orator catch all the poet's fire, and leave him no real mark of distinction except the iteration of numbers regularly returning. Thus in the decline of ancient European learning, Seneca, though he wrote in prose, is as much a poet as Lucan, and Longinus, tho' but a critic, more sublime than Apollonius.

From this then it appears that poetry is not discontinued, but altered among the English at present, the outward form seems different from what it was, but poetry still continues internally the same; the only question remains whether the metric feet used by the good writers of the last age, or the prosaic numbers employed by the good writers of this be preferable. And here the practice of the last age appears to me superior; they submitted to the restraint of numbers and similar sounds; and this restraint instead of diminishing augmented the force of their sentiment and stile. Fancy restrained may be compared to a fountain which plays highest by diminishing the aperture.¹ Of the truth of this maxim in every language, every fine writer is perfectly sensible from his own experience, and yet to explain the reason would be perhaps as difficult as to make a frigid genius profit by the discovery.

There is still another reason in favour of the practice of the last age, to be drawn from the variety of modulation. The musical period in prose is confined to a very few changes; the numbers in verse are capable of infinite variation. I speak not now from the practice of their modern verse writers, few of whom have any idea of musical variety, but run on in the same monotonous flow through the whole poem, but rather from the example of their former poets, who were tolerable masters of this variety, and also from a capacity in the language of still admitting various unanticipated music.

Several rules have been drawn up for varying the poetic measure, and critics have elaborately talked of accents and syllables, but good sense and a fine ear which rules can never teach, are what alone can

2-5 Both characters . . . regularly returning.] 62; *om. PL*

6-7 Lucan, and . . . a critic,] 62; Lucan and Longinus, tho' but a critic *PL*

26 their] *PL*; *om. 62*

27 monotonous] 62; monstrous *PL*

¹ In the *Enquiry* Goldsmith uses the same argument in almost the same words for rhymed as opposed to blank verse: 'Such a restriction upon the thought of a good poet, often lifts and encreases the vehemence of every sentiment; for fancy, like a fountain, plays highest by diminishing the aperture' (above, I, p. 318).

in such a case determine.¹ The rapturous flowings of joy, or the interruptions of indignation, require accents placed entirely different, and a structure consonant to the emotions they would express. Changing passions, and numbers changing with those passions make the whole secret of western as well as eastern poetry. In a word the great faults of the modern professed English poets are, that they seem to want numbers which should vary with the passion, and are more employed in describing to the imagination than striking at the heart. Adieu.

LETTER XLI.²

10

[The behaviour of the congregation in St. Paul's church at prayers.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

SOME time since I sent thee, oh holy disciple of Confucius, an account of the grand abbey or mausoleum of the kings and heroes of this nation. I have since been introduced to a temple not so ancient, but far superior in beauty and magnificence. In this which is the most considerable of the empire, there are no pompous inscriptions, no flattery paid the dead; but all is elegant and awfully simple. There are however a few rags hung round the walls, which have at a vast expence been taken from the enemy in the present war. The silk of which they are composed when new, might be valued at half a string of copper money in China; yet this wise people fitted out a fleet and an army in order to seize them; tho' now grown old, and scarce capable of being patched up into an handkerchief. By this conquest the English are said to have gained, and the French to have lost much honour. Is the honour of European nations placed only in tattered silk?

23 yet] 62; and yet *PL*

25-26 an handkerchief] *PL*; a handkerchief 62

27-28 Is the . . . tattered silk?] 62; The honour of each nation seeming to lie in the silk. *PL*

¹ Cf. Reynolds's statement about Goldsmith: 'No man ever wrote so much from his feelings as Dr. Goldsmith. I do not mean here the vulgar opinion of being possessed himself with the passion which he wished to excite. I mean only that he governed himself by an internal feeling of the right rather than by any written rules of art. He judged, for instance, by his ear, whether the verse was musical, without caring or perhaps knowing whether it would bear examination by the rules of the *prosodia*' (*Portraits by Sir Joshua Reynolds*, ed. Frederick W. Hilles [1952], p. 57).

² In the *Public Ledger* for Wednesday, 28 May 1760.

- In this temple I was permitted to remain during the whole service; and were you not already acquainted with the religion of the English, you might, from my description, be inclined to believe them as grossly idolatrous as the disciples of Lao. The idol which
 5 they seem to address, strides like a colossus over the door of the inner temple, which here, as with the Jews, is esteem'd the most sacred part of the building. It's oracles are delivered in an hundred various tones; which seem to inspire the worshippers with enthusiasm and awe: an old woman who appeared to be the priestess, was
 10 employed in various attitudes, as she felt the inspiration. When it began to speak, all the people remained fix'd in silent attention, nodding assent, looking approbation, appearing highly edified by those sounds, which to a stranger might seem inarticulate and unmeaning.
- 15 When the idol had done speaking, and the priestess had lock'd up its lungs with a key, observing almost all the company leaving the temple, I concluded the service was over, and taking my hat, was going to walk away with the crowd, when I was stopt by the man in black, who assur'd me that the ceremony had scarcely yet begun!
- 20 What, cried I, do I not see almost the whole body of the worshippers leaving the church? Would you persuade me that such numbers who profess religion and morality, would in this shameless manner quit the temple before the service was concluded, you surely mistake; not even the Kalmouks would be guilty of such an indecency,
 25 tho' all the object of their worship was but a joint stool!¹ My friend seem'd to blush for his countrymen, assuring me that those whom I saw running away, were only a parcel of musical blockheads, whose passion was merely for sounds, and whose heads were as empty as a fiddle case; those who remain behind, says he, are the
 30 true religious; they make use of music to warm their hearts, and

13 those] 62; *om. PL*

27 blockheads] 62; *ideots PL*

28 was merely for] 62; *lay only in PL*

30 make use of] 62; *use PL*

¹ Concerning the worship of the 'Khalmuck Tartars' Jonas Hanway says: 'They worship images, which generally consist of a small bit of wood about a palm in length; the upper part of it being rounded, is adorned with some rude marks to resemble human features; the figure being thus prepared is dressed up with a few rags' (*An Historical Account of the British Trade over the Caspian Sea* [1753], i. 101).

to lift them to a proper pitch of rapture; examine their behaviour, and you will confess there are some among us who practise true devotion. I now looked round me as he directed, but saw nothing of that fervent devotion which he had promised; one of the worshippers appeared to be ogling the company through a glass; another 5 was fervent not in addresses to heaven, but to his mistress; a third whispered, a fourth took snuff;¹ and the priest himself in a drowsy tone, read over the *duties* of the day. Bless my eyes, cried I, as I happened to look towards the door, what do I see; one of the worshippers fallen fast asleep, and actually sunk down on his cushion: 10 is he now enjoying the benefit of a trance, or does he receive the influence of some mysterious vision! *Alas, alas, replied my companion, no such thing; he has only had the misfortune of eating too hearty a dinner, and finds it impossible to keep his eyes open.* Turning to another part of the temple, I perceived a young lady just in the 15 same circumstances and attitude; strange, cried I, can she too have over eaten herself? *O, fie, replied my friend, you now grow censorious. She grow drowsy from eating too much; that would be profanation! She only sleeps now from having sat up all night at a brag party.* Turn me where I will then, says I, I can perceive no single symptom of 20 devotion among the worshippers, except from that old woman in the corner, who sits groaning behind the long sticks of a mourning fan; she indeed seems greatly edified with what she hears. *Aye, replied my friend, I knew we should find some to catch you; I know her; that is the deaf lady who lives in the cloysters.* 25

1 proper] 62; om. PL rapture;] 62; rapture, which may make them more fervent in their addresses to heaven; only PL

3 I] PL; par. 62 nothing] 62; none PL

8 Bless] PL; par. 62

18 much; that would be profanation!] 62; much! PL

19 sat] 62; set PL

24 I knew . . . catch you;] 62; om. PL

¹ This letter may in part have been suggested by d'Argens's *Lettres juives*, lettre iv, where the Jewish traveller in Paris enters a church by mistake: 'Je crus que c'étoit quelque Halle publique, & je n'eus jamais soupçonné que ce fût un Temple. En y entrant, je vis à peu près ce que j'avois vû à l'Académie de Musique. Il y avoit un seul Rang de Tribunes, qui formoit le même Spectacle que celles de la Sale de l'Opéra. Une de ces Tribunes étoit occupée par des Musiciens, dont la Simphonie me parut mélodieuse. Le milieu de cet Edifice étoit rempli d'Hommes & de Femmes. . . . Chacun parloit: je vois des Femmes tenir une Conduite pareille à celle dont je m'étois aperçu au Spectacle. Les Hommes couroient avec un Air de Dissipation, faisant usage de leurs Lorgnetes' (i. 53-54).

In short, the remissness of behaviour in almost all the worshippers, and some even of the guardians, struck me with surprise; I had been taught to believe that none were ever promoted to offices in the temple, but men remarkable for their superior sanctity, learning,
 5 and rectitude; that there was no such thing heard of as persons being introduced into the church merely to oblige a senator, or provide for the younger branch of a noble family: I expected, as their minds were continually set upon heavenly things, to see their eyes directed there also, and hoped from their behaviour to perceive
 10 their inclinations corresponding with their duty. But I am since informed, that some are appointed to preside over temples they never visit; and, while they receive all the money, are contented with letting others do all the good. Adieu.

LETTER XLII.¹

15 [The History of China more replete with great actions, than that of Europe.]
From Fum Hoam to Lien Chi Altangi, the discontented wanderer, by the way of Moscow.

MUST I ever continue to condemn thy perseverance, and blame that curiosity which destroys thy happiness! What
 20 yet untasted banquet, what luxury yet unknown, has rewarded thy painful adventures! Name a pleasure which thy native country could not amply procure, frame a wish that might not have been satisfied in China! Why then such toil, and such danger, in pursuit of raptures within your reach at home?

25 The Europeans, you will say, excel us in sciences and in arts; those sciences which bound the aspiring wish, and those arts which tend to gratify even unrestrained desire. They may perhaps outdo us in the arts of building ships, casting cannons, or measuring mountains; but are they superior in the greatest of all arts, the art
 30 of governing kingdoms and ourselves?

When I compare the history of China with that of Europe, how do I exult in being a native of that kingdom which derives its original from the sun. Upon opening the Chinese history, I there

¹ of behaviour in] 62; in the behaviour of *PL*

² some] 62; of some *PL*

25-27 sciences and . . . may perhaps] 62; the arts: they *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 30 May 1760.

behold an antient extended empire, established by laws which nature and reason seem to have dictated. The duty of children to their parents, a duty which nature implants in every breast, forms the strength of that government which has subsisted for time immemorial. Filial obedience is the first and greatest requisite of a state; 5 by this we become good subjects to our emperors, capable of behaving with just subordination to our superiors, and grateful dependants on heaven; by this we become fonder of marriage, in order to be capable of exacting obedience from others in our turn: by this we become good magistrates; for early submission is the truest 10 lesson to those who would learn to rule. By this the whole state may be said to resemble one family, of which the Emperor is the protector, father, and friend.¹

In this happy region, sequestered from the rest of mankind, I see a succession of princes who in general considered themselves as 15 the fathers of their people; a race of philosophers who bravely combated idolatry, prejudice, and tyranny, at the expence of their private happiness and immediate reputation. Whenever an usurper or a tyrant intruded into the administration, how have all the good and great been united against him. Can European history produce 20 an instance like that of the twelve mandarines, who all resolved to apprise the vicious emperor Tisiang² of the irregularity of his conduct. He who first undertook the dangerous task was cut in two by the emperor's order; the second was ordered to be tormented, and then put to a cruel death; the third undertook the task with intrepidity, and was instantly stabbed by the tyrant's hand: in this manner 25 they all suffered, except one. But not to be turned from his purpose, the brave survivor entering the palace with the instruments of

11-13 By this . . . and friend.] 62; *om. PL*

22 apprise] 62; advise *PL*

22-23 of the . . . his conduct] 62; one after the other *PL*

26 hand] 62; own hand *PL*

27-28 except one. . . his purpose,] 62; but one, when *PL*

¹ Cf. Du Halde, i. 248: 'The Political Government of *China* entirely turns on the reciprocal Duty of Parents and Children. The Emperor is called the Father of the Empire; the Vice-Roy is the Father of the Province under his Command; as the *Mandarin* is of the City which he governs. This single Principle is the Foundation of that great Respect and ready Obedience which the *Chinese* pay to the Officers who assist the Emperor to sustain the Weight of Government.' See also ii. 38.

² Du Halde has an account of Ti-syang, the fifth emperor of the first dynasty (i. 147), but it does not contain Goldsmith's anecdote.

torture in his hand, *Here*, cried he, addressing himself to the throne, *here, O Tisiang, are the marks your faithful subjects receive for their loyalty; I am wearied with serving a tyrant, and now come for my reward.* The emperor, struck with his intrepidity, instantly forgave
 5 the boldness of his conduct, and reformed his own. What European annals can boast of a tyrant thus reclaimed to lenity!

When five brethren had set upon the great emperor Ginsong alone, with his sabre he slew four of them: he was struggling with the fifth, when his guards coming up were going to cut the con-
 10 spirator into a thousand pieces. *No, no*, cried the emperor, with a calm and placid countenance, *of all his brothers he is the only one remaining, at least let one of the family be suffered to live, that his aged parents may have some body left to feed and comfort them.*¹

When Haitong, the last emperor of the house of Ming, saw him-
 15 self besieged in his own city by the usurper, he was resolved to issue from his palace with six hundred of his guards, and give the enemy battle; but they forsook him. Being thus without hopes, and chusing death rather than to fall alive into the hands of a rebel, he retired to his garden, conducting his little daughter, an only child
 20 in his hand. There, in a private arbour unsheathing his sword, he stabbed the young innocent to the heart, and then dispatching himself, left the following words written with his blood on the border of his vest. *Forsaken by my subjects, abandoned by my friends, use my body as you will, but spare, O spare, my people.*²

1 hand] 62; hands PL

3 loyalty] 62; labours and loyalty PL come for] 62; insist on PL

4-5 The emperor . . . his own.] 62; om. PL

6 annals] 62; annal PL a tyrant] 62; an emperor PL

11-12 of all . . . one remaining,] 62; om. PL

12 family] 62; unfortunate family PL his] 62; their poor PL

17 they] 62; his guards PL without] 62; deprived of PL

18 to fall] 62; fall PL

19 his little . . . only child] 62; an only child, his little daughter, PL

¹ This appears to be Goldsmith's elaboration of an anecdote concerning Jin-tsong, the fourth emperor of the twentieth dynasty, in Du Halde, i. 216: 'Being inform'd that five Brethren were guilty of Crimes, for which they were condemn'd to die, "Let one at least be pardoned, said the Emperor, that their unfortunate Parents may have somebody to feed and comfort them".'

² See the account of Whay-tsong, seventeenth and last emperor of the twenty-first dynasty 'nam'd Ming', in Du Halde, i. 226-7: ' . . . three Days after his Arrival [i.e. the arrival of the usurper Li at the imperial city] the Gates were open'd, and he entred in Triumph, at the Head of 300,000 Men. The Emperor was at this time shut up in the

An empire which has thus continued invariably the same for such a long succession of ages, which tho' at last conquered by the Tartars, still preserves its antient laws and learning; and may more properly be said to annex the dominions of Tartary to its empire, than to admit a foreign conqueror; an empire as large as Europe, 5 governed by one law, acknowledging subjection to one prince, and experiencing but one revolution of any continuance in the space of four thousand years; this is something so peculiarly great, that I am naturally led to despise all other nations on the comparison. Here we see no religious persecutions, no enmity between mankind for 10 difference in opinion. The disciples of Lao Kium, the idolatrous sectaries of Fohi, and the philosophical children of Confucius,¹ only strive to shew by their actions the truth of their doctrines.

Now turn from this happy peaceful scene, to Europe the theatre of intrigue, avarice and ambition. How many revolutions does it 15 not experience in the compass even of one age;² and to what do these revolutions tend but the destruction of thousands. Every great event is replete with some new calamity. The seasons of serenity are passed over in silence; their histories seem to speak only of the storms. There we see the Romans extending their power over 20

5 conqueror; an] 62; conqueror. An *PL*

7 revolution of any continuance] 62; continuing revolution *PL*

8 this is] 62; there is in such an history *PL*

9 other nations] 62; others *PL*

20 storms] *PL*; storm 62 There] *PL*; *par.* 62

Palace, wholly taken up with the ridiculous Superstitions of the *Bonzas*, and quite ignorant of what was doing without: But as he could not be long so, when he found he was betray'd, he intended to have gone out of the Palace with six hundred of his Guards, who forsook him. Being thus deprived of all Hopes of escaping, and preferring Death to the Disgrace of falling alive into the Hands of Rebels, he retired into his Garden; and after he had written these Words on the Border of his Vest, *My Subjects have basely deserted me, do with me what you please, but spare my People*, he kill'd his Daughter with the Stroke of a Sabre, and then hung himself upon a Tree. . . . ' Le Comte's version of the anecdote (i. 33) does not mention the emperor's name.

¹ Cf. d'Argens, *Lettres chinoises*, lettre viii (i. 56), where the chief sects of China are thus enumerated: '1. celle des Lettrés, qui suivent la doctrine des anciens Livres canoniques & les explications qu'en ont données *Confucius* & les autres Docteurs; 2. celle des sectateurs de *Lao-Kium*; & 3. celle qui adore la Divinité *Foé*.' Much the same enumeration appears in Du Halde, i. 639.

² Cf. *Lettres chinoises*, lettre lii (ii. 230): ' . . l'histoire de l'Europe est celle du desordre & de la confusion, bien différente en cela de celle de notre Empire [China], où, si l'on en excepte la dernière révolution qui nous a donné des Princes Tartares, à peine dans cinq ou six siècles en trouve-t-on une, comparable à celles qui arrivent journellement en Europe.'

barbarous nations, and in turn becoming a prey to those whom they had conquered. We see those barbarians when become christians, engaged in continual wars with the followers of Mahomet, or, more dreadful still, destroying each other. We see councils in
 5 the earlier ages authorizing every iniquity; crusades spreading desolation in the country left, as well as that to be conquered. Excommunications freeing subjects from natural allegiance and persuading to sedition; blood flowing in the fields and on scaffolds; tortures used as arguments to convince the recusant: to heighten
 10 the horror of the piece, behold it shaded with wars, rebellions, treasons, plots, politics, and poison! And what advantage has any country of Europe obtained from such calamities? Scarce any. Their dissensions for more than a thousand years have served to make each other unhappy, but have enriched none. All the great nations still
 15 nearly preserve their ancient limits; none have been able to subdue the other, and so terminate the dispute. France, in spite of the conquests of Edward the third, and Henry the fifth, notwithstanding the efforts of Charles the fifth and Philip the second, still remains within its antient limits. Spain, Germany, Great Britain, Poland,
 20 the states of the north are nearly still the same. What effect then has the blood of so many thousands, the destruction of so many cities produced? Nothing either great or considerable. The christian princes have lost indeed much from the enemies of Christendom, but they have gained nothing from each other. Their princes,
 25 because they preferred ambition to justice, deserve the character of enemies to mankind; and their priests, by neglecting morality for opinion, have mistaken the interests of society.

On whatever side we regard the history of Europe, we shall perceive it to be a tissue of crimes, follies, and misfortunes, of
 30 politics without design, and wars without consequence; in this long list of human infirmity, a great character, or a shining virtue may sometimes happen to arise, as we often meet a cottage or a cultivated

2 when] 62; soon *PL*

4 We see councils] 62; Councils *PL*

8-9 scaffolds; tortures used as] 62; scaffolds, instead of *PL*

9 recusant:] 62; recusant, *PL*

10 behold] 62; see *PL*

11 and] 62; *om. PL* And] *PL*; *par. 62*

23 enemies of Christendom] 62; Turks *PL*

24-27 Their princes . . . of society.] 62; Their princes deserve the character of enemies to mankind, because they preferred ambition to justice, and their priests appear to mistake the real interests of society, by neglecting morality for opinion. *PL*

spot, in the most hideous wilderness. But for an Alfred, an Alphonso, a Frederic, or one Alexander III. we meet a thousand princes who have disgraced humanity.

LETTER XLIII.¹

[An apostrophe on the supposed death of Voltaire.]

5

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

WE have just received accounts here, that Voltaire the poet and philosopher of Europe is dead!² He is now beyond the reach of the thousand enemies, who while living, degraded his writings and branded his character. Scarce a page of his latter productions that does not betray the agonies of an heart bleeding, under the scourge of unmerited reproach. Happy therefore at last in escaping from calumny, happy in leaving a world that was unworthy of him and his writings.

15

Let others, my friend, bestrew the hearses of the great with panegyric; but such a loss as the world has now suffered affects me with stronger emotions. When a philosopher dies, I consider myself as losing a patron, an instructor, and a friend. I consider the world as losing one who might serve to console her amidst the desolations of war and ambition. Nature every day produces in abundance men capable of filling all the requisite duties of authority; but she is niggard in the birth of an exalted mind, scarcely producing in a century a single genius to bless and enlighten a degenerate age.

20

2 a Frederic,] 62; *om. PL*

3 have] 62; *om. PL* humanity.] 62; humanity. Adieu. *PL*

8 accounts here] 62; an account in this kingdom *PL*

14 happy] 62; *om. PL*

17 as] 62; as that *PL*

22 authority] 62; grandeur *PL*

23-24 scarcely producing . . . single genius] 62; and scarcely does she produce one in a century *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 3 June 1760.

² See *ibid.* of 10 May 1760: 'By an account lately received from Switzerland we hear, that the celebrated author, Mons. Voltaire, was found dead in his bed, after eating a hearty supper, and going to repose seemingly in good health.' The report was denied in the *London Chronicle* on the same day that Goldsmith's letter appeared in the *Public Ledger*.

Prodigal in the production of kings, governors, mandarines, chams, and courtiers, she seems to have forgotten for more than three thousand years, the manner in which she once formed the brain of a Confucius;¹ and well it is she has forgotten, when a bad world
 5 gave him so very bad a reception.²

Whence, my friend, this malevolence which has ever pursued the great even to the tomb; whence this more than fiend-like disposition of embittering the lives of those who would make us more wise and more happy.

10 When I cast my eye over the fates of several philosophers, who have at different periods enlightened mankind, I must confess it inspires me with the most degrading reflections on humanity. When I read of the stripes of Mentiuz,³ the tortures of Tchén,⁴ the bowl of Socrates, and the bath of Seneca; when I hear of the persecutions
 15 of Dante,⁵ the imprisonment of Galileo, the indignities suffered by Montaigne, the banishment of Cartesius, the infamy of Bacon; and that even Locke himself escaped not without reproach; when I think

1 Prodigal] 62; Nature so prodigal *PL*, with *par*.

2 she] 62; *om. PL*

10-2 (p. 183) When I . . . fellow creatures.] 62; in *PL* this *par.* is placed after the one following.

¹ The paragraph to this point (except the first sentence) is a free translation of d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises*, lettre lxxxiv (iii. 206, 209-10): 'Lorsque j'apprens . . . qu'il est mort quelque Savant distingué, quoiqu'il ne me soit connu que par ses Ouvrages, je m'afflige aussi vivement que si je perdois un bon pere. . . .

'La Nature . . . produit tous les jours en abondance des gens destinés à être riches, à posséder des emplois distingués; mais elle est avare de la naissance des Philosophes. A peine en donne-t-elle à l'Univers cinq ou six dans un siècle; encore ne sont-ils pas tous égaux en mérite, & cette Nature, prodigue dans la formation des Princes, des Souverains, des Mandarins, des Courtisans, semble avoir oublié depuis vingt siècles comment elle construisit en Asie le cerveau de Confucius. . . .'

² Possibly Goldsmith refers to the fact that after becoming 'Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lû', 'Confucius finding that he could no longer maintain the prudent Maxims which he had establish'd, laid down his Place of Prime Minister, and retir'd out of the Kingdom' (Du Halde, i. 167). Du Halde in general represents his reception by the world as favourable.

³ The 'stripes' seem to be Goldsmith's invention; according to Du Halde, Menciuz 'flourish'd in the highest Reputation' (i. 169).

⁴ In the *Lettres chinoises*, lettre xxvi, d'Argens discusses the doctrine of 'Tchin, Philosophe attaché aux Commentateurs modernes' (i. 237); but nothing is said of his tortures.

⁵ Cf. Goldsmith's remark about Dante in the *Enquiry*: 'Be it his greatest merit therefore to have lifted up the standard of nature, in spite of all the opposition and the persecution he received from cotemporary criticism' (above, I, p. 274).

on such subjects, I hesitate whether most to blame, the ignorance or the villainy of my fellow creatures.¹

Should you look for the character of Voltaire among the journalists and illiterate writers of the age; you would there find him characterized as a monster, with an head turned to wisdom, and an heart inclining to vice; the powers of his mind and the baseness of his principles forming a detestable contrast. But seek for his character among writers like himself, and you find him very differently described. You perceive him in their accounts possessed of good nature, humanity, greatness of soul, fortitude, and almost every virtue; in this description those who might be suppos'd best acquainted with his character are unanimous. The royal Prussian*, Dargens†, Diderot§, Dalambert, and Fontenelle conspire in drawing the picture, in describing the friend of man and the patron of every rising genius.

An inflexible perseverance in what he thought was right, and a generous detestation of flattery, formed the ground-work of this great man's character. From these principles many strong virtues and a few faults arose; as he was warm in his friendship, and severe in resentment, all that mention him seem possessed of the same

* Philosophe sans souci.² † Let. Chin.³ § Encycloped.⁴

3-15 Should you . . . rising genius.] 62; in *PL* this par. continues the one before the last.

4 illiterate] 62; wretched illiterate *PL* would] *PL*; will 62

5 an head] *PL*; a head 62 and an] 62; but an *PL*

6-7 vice; the . . . detestable contrast] 62; baseness *PL*

9 perceive] 62; find *PL*

14-15 picture, in . . . rising genius] 62; picture *PL*

17 this] 62; the *PL*

18 character] 62; character whom we have lost so lately *PL* these] 62; those *PL*

19 a] *PL*; om. 62

¹ For the idea of this paragraph, together with the examples of Montaigne, Descartes, and Locke, Goldsmith is perhaps indebted to *Lettres chinoises*, lettre xxxvi (ii. 53-63).

² The reference is to Frederick the Great's 'Ode X. A Voltaire', in *Œuvres du Philosophe de Sans-Souci* (Potsdam, 1760), pp. 36-39, the tone of which is set in the first two verses:

Soutien du goût, des arts, de l'éloquence,
Fils d'Apollon, Homere de la France. . .

³ Praise of Voltaire is frequent in the *Lettres chinoises*; see, for example, i. 271-82; ii. 259, 294-5; iii. 189-90, 240-1, 264-5.

⁴ A glowing account of Voltaire's genius is given in the *Encyclopédie*, I (1751), xxxii, in the 'Discours préliminaire des éditeurs', i.e. Diderot and D'Alembert.

qualities, and speak of him with rapture or detestation. A person of his eminence can have few indifferent as to his character; every reader must be an enemy or an admirer.

This poet¹ began the course of glory so early as the age of eighteen, and even then was author of a tragedy which deserves applause; possessed of a small patrimony he preserved his independance, in an age of venality, and supported the dignity of learning, by teaching his cotemporary writers to live like him, above the favours of the great. He was banished his native country for a satire upon the royal concubine. He had accepted the place of historian to the French king, but refused to keep it, when he found it was presented only in order that he should be the first flatterer of the state.

The great Prussian received him as an ornament to his kingdom, and had sense enough to value his friendship and profit by his instructions. In this court he continued till an intrigue, with which the world seems hitherto unacquainted, obliged him to quit that country.² His own happiness, the happiness of the monarch, *of his sister*, of a part of the court, rendered his departure necessary.

Tired at length of courts, and all the follies of the great, he retired to Switzerland, a country of liberty, where he enjoyed tranquillity and the muse. Here, though without any taste for magnificence himself, he usually entertained at his table the learned and polite of Europe, who were attracted by a desire of seeing a person from whom they had received so much satisfaction. The entertainment was conducted with the utmost elegance, and the conversation was that of philosophers. Every country that at once united liberty and science, were his peculiar favourites. The being an Englishman was to him a character that claimed admiration and respect.

Between Voltaire and the disciples of Confucius, there are many differences; however, being of a different opinion does not in the

¹ of him] 62; *om. PL*

⁶ in] 62; even in *PL*

⁷ venality] 62; flattery *PL*

¹¹ found] 62; found that *PL*

¹² the first . . . of the] 62; first flatter of *PL*

¹⁷ *of his sister*] 62; *no italics PL*

³⁰ being] 62; my being *PL*

¹ Most of the details of Voltaire's life that follow are treated more fully in Goldsmith's 'Memoirs of M. de Voltaire' (probably written by the beginning of 1759). See Vol. III below.

² The world is still unacquainted with this intrigue, which may be Goldsmith's invention.

least diminish my esteem, I am not displeased with my brother, because he happens to ask our father for favours in a different manner from me. Let his errors rest in peace, his excellencies deserve admiration; let me with the wise admire his wisdom; let the envious and the ignorant ridicule his foibles; the folly of others is 5 ever most ridiculous to those who are themselves most foolish.

Adieu.

LETTER XLIV.¹

[Wisdom and precept may lessen our miseries; but can never encrease our positive satisfactions.] 10

From Lien Chi Altangi to Hingpo, a slave in Persia.

IT is impossible to form a philosophic system of happiness which is adapted to every condition in life, since every person who travels in this great pursuit takes a separate road. The differing colours which suit different complexions, are not more various than 15 the different pleasures appropriated to particular minds. The various sects who have pretended to give lessons to instruct men in happiness, have described their own particular sensations without considering ours, have only loaded their disciples with constraint, without adding to their real felicity. 20

If I find pleasure in dancing, how ridiculous would it be in me to prescribe such an amusement for the entertainment of a cripple; should he on the other hand place his chief delight in painting, yet would he be absurd in recommending the same relish to one who 25 had lost the power of distinguishing colours. General directions are therefore commonly useless; and to be particular would exhaust volumes, since each individual may require a peculiar system of precepts to direct his choice.

Every mind seems capable of entertaining a certain quantity of happiness, which no institutions can encrease, no circumstances 30

12-13 It is . . . in life] 62; HAPPINESS, my son, which we all seek, and which we all may find is impossible to be attained by the observance of rules professing to point out the way PL

18-19 have described . . . considering ours,] 62; om. PL

28 to direct his choice] 62; om. PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 6 June 1760.

alter, and entirely independent on fortune. Let any man compare his present fortune with the past, and he will probably find himself upon the whole neither better nor worse than formerly.

Gratified ambition, or irreparable calamity may produce transient
 5 sensations of pleasure or distress. Those storms may discompose in proportion as they are strong, or the mind is pliant to their impression. But the soul, though at first lifted up by the event, is every day operated upon with diminish'd influence; and at length subsides into the level of its usual tranquility. Should some unexpected turn
 10 of fortune take thee from fetters, and place thee on a throne, exultation would be natural upon the change; but the temper, like the face, would soon resume its native serenity.

Every wish therefore which leads us to expect happiness somewhere else but where we are, every institution which teaches us that
 15 we should be better, by being possessed of something new, which promises to lift us a step higher than we are, only lays a foundation for uneasiness, because it contracts debts which it cannot repay; it calls that a good, which, when we have found it, will in fact add nothing to our happiness.

To enjoy the present, without regret for the past, or solicitude for the future, has been the advice rather of poets than philosophers. And yet the precept seems more rational than is generally imagined. It is the only general precept respecting the pursuit of happiness, that can be applied with propriety to every condition of life. The
 25 man of pleasure, the man of business, and the philosopher are equally interested in its disquisition. If we do not find happiness in the present moment, in what shall we find it? Either in reflecting on the past, or prognosticating the future. But let us see how these are capable of producing satisfaction.

A remembrance of what is past, and an anticipation of what is to come, seem to be the two faculties by which man differs most from other animals. Though brutes enjoy them in a limited degree, yet their whole life seems taken up in the present, regardless of the past

1 on] 62; of *PL*

4 transient] 62; *om. PL*

5 distress] 62; distress, which continue for a time *PL*

17 debts which it cannot repay] 62; for what it cannot perform *PL*

22 And yet the] 62; The *PL*

28 But let us see how] 62; How *PL*

29 satisfaction] 62; satisfaction is to be considered *PL*

32 them] 62; these faculties *PL*

and the future.¹ Man on the contrary, endeavours to derive his happiness, and experiences most of his miseries from these two sources.

Is this superiority of reflection a prerogative of which we should boast, and for which we should thank nature; or is it a misfortune 5 of which we should complain and be humble. Either from the abuse, or from the nature of things, it certainly makes our condition more miserable.

Had we a privilege of calling up, by the power of memory, only such passages as were pleasing, unmixed with such as were disagreeable, we might then excite at pleasure an ideal happiness, perhaps more poignant than actual sensation. But this is not the case; the past is never represented without some disagreeable circumstance, which tarnishes all its beauty; the remembrance of an evil carries in it nothing agreeable, and to remember a good is always 15 accompanied with regret. Thus we lose more than we gain by remembrance.

And we shall find our expectation of the future to be a gift more distressful even than the former. To fear an approaching evil is certainly a most disagreeable sensation; and in expecting an approaching good, we experience the inquietude of wanting actual possession. 20

Thus, which ever way we look, the prospect is disagreeable. Behind, we have left pleasures we shall never more enjoy, and therefore regret; and before, we see pleasures which we languish 25 to possess, and are consequently uneasy till we possess them. Was there any method of seizing the present, unimbittered by such reflections, then would our state be tolerably easy.

This, indeed, is the endeavour of all mankind, who untutored by philosophy, pursue as much as they can a life of amusement 30

5 should thank] *PL*; shall thank 62

6 Either] 62; Though these faculties seem granted man to meliorate his condition, yet *PL*

7-8 it certainly . . . more miserable] 62; they make his condition the worse *PL*

16-17 gain by remembrance] 62; gained by the gift *PL*

18 And we] 62; We *PL*

24-25 enjoy, and therefore regret] 62; enjoy *PL*

26 possess, and . . . possess them] 62; possess *PL*

28 then would our state] 62; our state would then *PL*

29-30 untutored by philosophy,] 62; *om. PL*

¹ Johnson makes this same distinction between man and the animals at the beginning of the *Rambler*, No. 41 (7 August 1750).

and dissipation. Every rank in life, and every size of understanding, seems to follow this alone; or not pursuing it, deviates from happiness. The man of pleasure pursues dissipation by profession; the man of business pursues it not less, as every voluntary labour he
 5 undergoes is only dissipation in disguise. The philosopher himself, even while he reasons upon the subject, does it unknowingly with a view of dissipating the thoughts of what he was, or what he must be.

The subject therefore comes to this. Which is the most perfect
 10 sort of dissipation: pleasure, business, or philosophy; which best serves to exclude those uneasy sensations, which *memory* or *anticipation* produce.

The enthusiasm of pleasure charms only by intervals. The highest rapture lasts only for a moment, and all the senses seem so combined,
 15 as to be soon tired into languor by the gratification of any one of them. It is only among the poets we hear of men changing to one delight, when satiated with another. In nature it is very different: the glutton, when sated with the full meal, is unqualified to feel the real pleasure of drinking; the drunkard in turn finds few of those
 20 transports which lovers boast in enjoyment; and the lover, when cloyed, finds a diminution of every other appetite. Thus, after a full indulgence of any one sense, the man of pleasure finds a languor in all, is placed in a chasm between past and expected enjoyment, perceives an interval which must be filled up. The present can give
 25 no satisfaction, because he has already robbed it of every charm: a mind thus left without immediate employment, naturally recurs to the past or the future: the reflector finds that he was happy, and knows that he cannot be so now; he sees that he may yet be happy, and wishes the hour was come: thus every period of his continuance
 30 is miserable, except that very short one of immediate gratification. Instead of a life of dissipation, none has more frequent conversations with disagreeable *self* than he: his enthusiasms are but few and transient; his appetites, like angry creditors, continually making

3 profession] 62; his profession *PL*

6 unknowingly] 62; merely *PL*

8 must] 62; will *PL*

9 this. Which] 62; this, which *PL*

11-12 *memory* or *anticipation*] 62; no *italics PL*

14 seem] 62; seemed *PL*

20 the lover] 62; even the lover *PL*

30 very] 62; *om. PL*

fruitless demands for what he is unable to pay; and the greater his former pleasure, the more strong his regret, the more impatient his expectations: a life of pleasure is therefore the most unpleasing life in the world.

Habit has rendered the man of business more cool in his desires, 5 he finds less regret for past pleasures, and less solicitude for those to come. The life he now leads, tho' tainted in some measure with hope, is yet not afflicted so strongly with regret, and is less divided between short lived rapture and lasting anguish. The pleasures he has enjoyed are not so vivid, and those he has to expect cannot 10 consequently create so much anxiety.

The philosopher, who extends his regard to all mankind, must have still a smaller concern for what has already affected or may hereafter affect himself; the concerns of others make his whole study, and that study is his pleasure; and this pleasure is continuing 15 in its nature because it can be changed at will, leaving but few of those anxious intervals which are employed in remembrance or anticipation. The philosopher by this means leads a life of almost continued dissipation; and reflection, which makes the uneasiness and misery of others, serves as a companion and instructor to him. 20

In a word, positive happiness is constitutional,¹ and incapable of encrease; misery is artificial, and generally proceeds from our folly. Philosophy can add to our happiness in no other manner, but by diminishing our misery: it should not pretend to encrease our present stock, but make us œconomists of what we are possessed of. 25 The great source of calamity lies in regret or anticipation: he, therefore, is most wise who thinks of the present alone, regardless of the past or the future. This is impossible to the man of pleasure; it is

3 a life . . . is therefore] 62; thus the man of pleasure's is *PL*

5-6 Habit has . . . desires, he] 62; The man of business *PL*

7 come. The] 62; come; habit has rendered him more cool in his desires, and the *PL*

12 regard] 62; regards *PL*

13 already] 62; *om. PL*

14 hereafter] 62; *om. PL*

16 because it . . . at will] 62; *om. PL*

17 those] *PL*; these 62

17-18 remembrance or anticipation] 62; fears or sorrows *PL*

19-20 dissipation; and . . . others, serves] 62; dissipation and reflection, which makes the uneasiness and misery of others serve *PL*

25 present] 62; *om. PL* possessed] 62; already possessed *PL*

¹ Cf. Goldsmith's essay in the *Bee*, No. II, entitled 'Happiness, in a Great Measure, dependant on Constitution'.

difficult to the man of business; and is in some measure attainable by the philosopher. Happy were we all born philosophers, all born, with a talent of thus dissipating our own cares, by spreading them upon all mankind!

Adieu.

5

LETTER XLV.¹

[The ardour of the people of London, in running after sights and monsters.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

10 **T**HO' the frequent invitations I receive from men of distinction here might excite the vanity of some, I am quite mortified however when I consider the motives that inspire their civility. I am sent for not to be treated as a friend, but to satisfy curiosity; not to be entertained so much as wondered at; the same earnestness which excites them to see a Chinese, would have made them
15 equally proud of a visit from the rhinoceros.

From the highest to the lowest, this people seem fond of sights and monsters. I am told of a person here who gets a very comfortable livelihood by making wonders, and then selling or shewing them to the people for money, no matter how insignificant they
20 were in the beginning; by locking them up close, and shewing for money, they soon became prodigies! His first essay in this way was to exhibit himself as a wax-work figure behind a glass door at a puppet show. Thus keeping the spectators at a proper distance, and having his head adorned with a copper crown, he looked extremely
25 *natural, and very like the life itself*. He continued this exhibition with success, till an involuntary fit of sneezing brought him to life before all the spectators, and consequently rendered him for that time as entirely useless, as the peaceable inhabitant of a catacomb.

Determined to act the statue no more, he next levied contributions
30 under the figure of an Indian king; and by painting his face, and

2 all born philosophers,] 62; *om. PL*

3 own] 62; *om. PL*

10-11 some, I . . . mortified however] 62; others, yet I find myself quite mortified *PL*
19-21 money, no . . . became prodigies!] 62; money. *PL*

25 *and very . . . life like itself*] 62; and very like life itself *PL*

27-28 as entirely . . . a catacomb] 62; entirely useless *PL*

30 his face,] 62; *om. PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Monday, 9 June 1760.

counterfeiting the savage howl, he frighted several ladies and children with amazing success: in this manner therefore he might have lived very comfortably, had he not been arrested for a debt, that was contracted when he was the figure in wax-work: thus his face underwent an involuntary ablution, and he found himself reduced 5 to his primitive complexion and indigence.

After some time, being freed from gaol, he was now grown wiser, and instead of making himself a wonder, was resolved only to make wonders. He learned the art of pasting up mummies; was never at a loss for an artificial *lusus naturæ*; nay, it has been reported, that he sold seven petrified lobsters of his own manufacture to a noted collector of rarities; but this the learned Cracavius Putridus has undertaken to refute in a very elaborate dissertation.

His last wonder was nothing more than an halter, yet by this halter he gained more than by all his former exhibitions. The people, it seems, had got it in their heads that a certain criminal was to be 15 hanged with a silken rope.¹ Now there was nothing they so much desired to see as this very rope; and he was resolved to gratify their curiosity: he therefore got one made, not only of silk, but to render it the more striking, several threads of gold were intermixed. The 20 people paid their money only to see silk, but were highly satisfied when they found it was mixed with gold into the bargain.² It is scarce necessary to mention, that the projector sold his silken rope

3 that] 62; which *PL*

4 he was] 62; he acted *PL*

7 After some time, being freed] 62; Freed *PL*

11 sold] *PL*; has sold 62 lobsters] 62; crabs *PL*

12 Cracavius] *PL*; Cracovius 62

13 undertaken to refute] 62; refuted *PL* dissertation] 62; treatise *PL*

14-15 yet by this halter] 62; by which *PL*

16 in] 62; into *PL*

¹ The belief that Earl Ferrers (see Letter XXXVIII above) was to be hanged with a silken rope may have had its origin in an account such as that in the *London Chronicle* for 12-14 February 1760: 'We hear he [Ferrers] is to be tried in about seven weeks; and the form will be the same as at the trial of ——— Stourton, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, to whom, after being found guilty, her Majesty was pleased to give his choice, whether he would be hanged in a hempen or silken cord.'

² Cf. the *Public Ledger* for 8 May 1760: 'The following device was put in execution early on Monday last, the assistant of Jack Ketch exhibited for a public spectacle at an ale-house on Tower-Hill, an halter, in which were interwoven some gold threads, under pretence it was the very identical halter with which the condemned lord [Ferrers] was to be executed, and by the said means that illustrious personage raised a large contribution from the fools who were so weak as to believe his assertion.'

for almost what it had cost him, as soon as the criminal was known to be hanged in hempen materials.¹

By their fondness of sights, one would be apt to imagine, that instead of desiring to see things as they should be, they are rather
 5 solicitous of seeing them as they ought not to be. A cat with four legs is disregarded, though never so useful; but if it has but two, and is consequently incapable of catching mice, it is reckoned inestimable, and every man of taste is ready to raise the auction. A man, though in his person faultless as an ærial genius, might
 10 starve; but if stuck over with hideous warts like a porcupine, his fortune is made for ever, and he may propagate the breed with impunity and applause.

A good woman in my neighbourhood, who was bred an habit-maker, though she handled her needle tolerably well, could scarcely
 15 get employment. But being obliged by an accident to have both her hands cut off from the elbows, what would in another country have been her ruin, made her fortune here, she now was thought more fit for her trade than before; business flowed in apace, and all people paid for seeing the mantua-maker who wrought without
 20 hands.

A gentleman shewing me his collection of pictures, stopped at one with peculiar admiration; there, cries he, is an inestimable piece. I gazed at the picture for some time, but could see none of those graces with which he seemed enraptured: it appeared to me
 25 the most paltry piece of the whole collection: I therefore demanded where those beauties lay, of which I was yet insensible. Sir, cries he, the merit does not consist in the piece, but in the manner in

1 it had cost him] 62; he had bought it *PL*

2 hempen] 62; the usual *PL*

3 fondness of] 62; fondness for *PL* that] 62; that this people, *PL*

4 they are] 62; are *PL*

6-7 it has but two, and is] 62; with two, and *PL*

9 faultless] 62; as faultless *PL*

12 impunity and] 62; *om. PL*

15 But being] 62; Being *PL*

16-17 what would . . . she now] 62; her fortune was made, and she *PL*

18 than] 62; now than *PL*

19-20 without hands] 62; with her stumps *PL*

25 demanded] 62; asked him *PL*

26 of] 62; to *PL*

¹ The account of the execution of Earl Ferrers in the *Public Ledger* for 6 May 1760 mentions 'the halter, which was a common one'.

which it was done. The painter drew the whole with his foot,¹ and held the pencil between his toes: I bought it at a very great price; for peculiar merit should ever be rewarded.

But these people are not more fond of wonders than liberal in rewarding those who shew them. From the wonderful dog of 5 knowledge at present under the patronage of the nobility,² down to the man with the box, who professes to shew *the most imitation of nature that was ever seen*;³ they all live in luxury. A singing woman shall collect subscriptions in her own coach and six; a fellow shall make a fortune by tossing a straw from his toe to his nose; one in 10 particular has found that eating fire was the most ready way to live;⁴ and another, who gingles several bells fixed to his cap, is the only man that I know of who has received emolument from the labours of his head.

A young author, a man of good nature and learning, was com- 15 plaining to me some nights ago of this misplaced generosity of the times. Here, says he, have I spent part of my youth in attempting to instruct and amuse my fellow creatures, and all my reward has been solitude, poverty, and reproach; while a fellow, possessed of even the smallest share of fiddling merit, or who has perhaps learned 20

1 done. The] 62; done; for the PL

3 peculiar] 62; such peculiar PL ever] 62; om. PL

4 But these people] 62; The English PL

8-10 luxury. A . . . shall make] 62; luxury; a fellow here has made PL

10-11 one in particular] 62; another PL

12 another] 62; a third PL

13 know of] 62; know PL received] 62; of late received any PL

17 part] 62; a part PL

¹ As Dobson notes, Horace Walpole tells of Cornelius Ketel (1548-1604), who 'undertook to paint with his feet' (*Anecdotes of Painting in England* [1862], i. 160). Walpole's work was, of course, too late to serve Goldsmith as a source of information.

² See the *Daily Advertiser* for 13 March 1760: 'Till Saturday Night next, . . . the Curious may be amused with the astonishing Exhibitions of the Dog of Knowledge. This Animal is so sagacious, as to read, write, and cast Accounts, &c. To be seen at the Ring and Pearl, opposite Norfolk-Street in the Strand. The Person that shews this Creature is a Man that weighs no more than two Stone and six Pounds, . . . and has had the Honour of being seen by his Majesty, the Prince of Wales, and the rest of the Royal Family.'

³ Perhaps the following advertisement in the *Daily Advertiser* for 26 May 1760 indicates the kind of thing alluded to: 'To be seen gratis . . . at Mr. GELY's . . . Four Boxes of curious Historical Grotto-Work; the human Figures (some near eight Inches high) all of Alabaster colour'd to the Life, the black Coral, Spangles, and Silken Trees, are all really beautiful, and the Whole very elegantly laid out. . . .'

⁴ Probably 'Powel the fire-eater' mentioned by Goldsmith in the *Critical Review* for January 1759 (see above, I, p. 160 and note).

to whistle double, is rewarded, applauded, and caressed! Prithee, young man, says I to him, are you ignorant, that in so large a city as this, it is better to be an amusing than an useful member of society?¹ Can you leap up, and touch your feet four times before
 5 you come to the ground?² *No, Sir.* Can you pimp for a man of quality? *No, Sir.* Can you stand upon two horses at full speed? *No, Sir.* Can you swallow a pen-knife? *I can do none of these tricks.* Why then, cried I, there is no other prudent means of subsistence left, but to apprise the town that you speedily intend to eat up your
 10 own nose, by subscription.

I have frequently regretted that none of our eastern posture masters or show men have ever ventured to England. I should be pleased to see that money circulate in Asia, which is now sent to Italy and France, in order to bring their vagabonds hither. Several
 15 of our tricks would undoubtedly give the English high satisfaction. Men of fashion would be greatly pleased with the postures as well as the condescension of our dancing girls; and ladies would equally admire the conductors of our fire-works. What an agreeable surprise would it be to see an huge fellow with whiskers flash a charged
 20 blunderbuss full in a lady's face, without singing her hair, or melting her pomatum. Perhaps when the first surprize was over, she might then grow familiar with danger; and the ladies might vie with each other in standing fire with intrepidity.

But of all the wonders of the east, the most useful, and I should
 25 fancy, the most pleasing, would be the looking-glass of Lao, which reflects the mind as well as the body. It is said that the emperor Chusi³ used to make his concubines dress their heads and their hearts in one of these glasses every morning; while the lady was at her toilet, he would frequently look over her shoulder; and it
 30 is recorded, that among the three hundred which composed his

9 left] 62; left you *PL* speedily intend] 62; greedily intend, when the subscription is full, *PL*

10 nose, by subscription] 62; nose *PL*

19 an huge] *PL*; a huge 62

22 the ladies] 62; ladies *PL*

24-25 and I should fancy,] 62; though perhaps not *PL*

29 her toilet] 62; the toilet *PL*

¹ For earlier uses of this contrast see the Index under 'Amusing'.

² This leaping and the straw-balancing in the preceding paragraph are taken notice of in Letter XXI above.

³ This name does not appear in the 'Annals of the Chinese Monarchs' in Du Halde.

seraglio, not one was found whose mind was not even more beautiful than her person.

I make no doubt but a glass in this country would have the very same effect. The English ladies, concubines and all, would undoubtedly cut very pretty figures in so faithful a monitor. There, 5 should we happen to peep over a lady's shoulder while dressing, we might be able to see neither gaming nor ill nature; neither pride, debauchery, nor a love of gadding. We should find her, if any sensible defect appeared in the mind, more careful in rectifying it, than plaistering up the irreparable decays of the person; nay, I am 10 even apt to fancy, that ladies would find more real pleasure in this utensil in private, than in any other bauble imported from China, though never so expensive, or amusing.

LETTER XLVI.¹

[A dream.]

15

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

UPON finishing my last letter I retired to rest, reflecting upon the wonders of the glass of Lao, wishing to be possessed of one here, and resolved in such a case to oblige every lady with a sight 20 of it for nothing.² What fortune denied me waking, fancy supplied in a dream; the glass, I know not how, was put into my possession, and I could perceive several ladies approaching, some voluntarily,

1 not one . . . was not] 62; there was not one whose mind was not found PL

4 effect. The] 62; effect; and the PL

10 plaistering] 62; in plaistering PL

13 amusing.] 62; never so amusing. Adieu. PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 10 June 1760.

² Sells notes (p. 119) that in the *Mercure de France* for June 1755, pp. 38-39, there is a poem entitled 'Le Miroir', which describes a glass that shows people as they really are ('Un Miroir merveilleux . . . Où se peignoit par art le naturel des gens'). In the poem, however, each person takes his own reflection for someone else—his neighbour, his brother, and so on. Sells also suggests (p. 118) a more doubtful source in *Le Cabinet du philosophe* by Marivaux. Another possible source is the *Tatler*, No. 102 (3 December 1709), ascribed to Addison, where the goddess of Justice has the female world look into 'the mirror of truth'. 'It was the particular property of this looking-glass to banish all false appearances, and show people what they are. The whole woman was represented, without regard to the usual external features, which were made entirely conformable to their real characters. In short, the most accomplished (taking in the whole circle of female perfections) were the most beautiful; and the most defective, the most deformed.'

others driven forward against their wills by a set of discontented genii, whom by intuition I knew were their husbands.

The apartment in which I was to show away was filled with several gaming tables, as if just forsaken; the candles were burnt
 5 to the socket, and the hour was five o'clock in the morning. Placed at one end of the room, which was of prodigious length, I could more easily distinguish every female figure as she marched up from the door; but guess my surprize, when I could scarce perceive one blooming or agreeable face among the number. This, however,
 10 I attributed to the early hour, and kindly considered that the face of a lady just risen from bed ought always to find a compassionate advocate.

The first person who came up in order to view her intellectual face was a commoner's wife, who, as I afterwards found, being bred
 15 during her virginity in a pawn-broker's shop, now attempted to make up the defects of breeding and sentiment by the magnificence of her dress, and the expensiveness of her amusements. "Mr. Showman, cried she, approaching, I am told you *has* something to shew in *that there* sort of magic lanthorn, by which folks can see
 20 themselves on the inside; I protest, as my lord Beetle says, I am sure it will be vastly pretty, for I have never seen any thing like it before. But how; are we to strip off our cloaths and be turned inside out? if so, as Lord Beetle says, I absolutely declare off; for I would not strip for the world before a man's face, and so I *tells*
 25 his lordship almost every night of my life." I informed the lady that I would dispense with the ceremony of stripping, and immediately presented my glass to her view.

As when a first rate beauty, after having with difficulty escaped the small-pox, revisits her favourite mirror, that mirror which had
 30 repeated the flattery of every lover, and even added force to the compliment; expecting to see what had so often given her pleasure, she no longer beholds the cherried lip, the polished forehead, and speaking blush, but an hateful phyz quilted into a thousand seams

11 ought always to] 62; should always *PL*

14 commoner's] 62; citizen's *PL*

15 in a] 62; in her father's, a *PL*

20-21 am sure] 62; believe *PL*

26 of stripping] 62; *om. PL*

28 having with difficulty escaped] 62; with difficulty escaping from *PL*

29 revisits] 62; once more revisits *PL*

29-30 mirror which . . . every lover] 62; had told her what every lover told her *PL*

32 she] 62; is disappointed, and *PL*

by the hand of deformity; grief, resentment, and rage fill her bosom by turns; she blames the fates and the stars, but most of all the unhappy glass feels her resentment. So it was with the lady in question; she had never seen her own mind before, and was now shocked at its deformity. One single look was sufficient to satisfy 5 her curiosity; I held up the glass to her face, and she shut her eyes; no entreaties could prevail upon her to gaze once more; she was even going to snatch it from my hands, and break it in a thousand pieces. I found it was time therefore to dismiss her as incorrigible, and shew away to the next that offered. 10

This was an unmarried lady, who continued in a state of virginity till thirty-six, and then admitted a lover when she despaired of an husband. No woman was louder at a revel than she, perfectly free hearted, and almost in every respect a man; she understood ridicule to perfection, and was once known even to sally out, in order to 15 beat the watch. "Here, you my dear with the outlandish face, (said she addressing me) let me take a single peep. Not that I care three dams what figure I may cut in the glass of such an old fashioned creature; if I am allowed the beauties of the face by people of fashion, I know the world will be complaisant enough to toss me the beauties 20 of the mind into the bargain." I held my glass before her as she desired, and must confess, was shocked with the reflection. The lady, however, gazed for some time with the utmost complacency; and at last turning to me with the most satisfied smile said, she never could think she had been half so handsome. 25

Upon her dismissal a lady of distinction was reluctantly hawled along to the glass by her husband; in bringing her forward, as he came first to the glass himself, his mind appeared tinctured with immoderate jealousy, and I was going to reproach him for using her with such severity; but when the lady came to present herself, I 30 immediately retracted; for alas it was seen that he had but too much reason for his suspicions.

The next was a lady who usually teized all her acquaintance in desiring to be told of her faults, and then never mended any. Upon approaching the glass, I could readily perceive vanity, affectation, 35

9 was] 62; *om. PL*

16 watch] 62; nightly watch *PL*

19 if] 62; for if *PL*

22 confess] 62; confess, for my own part *PL* reflection] 62; prospect *PL*

30-31 came to . . . I immediately] 62; herself came to present, I instantly *PL*

35 I] 62; she *PL*

and some other ill-looking blots on her mind; wherefore by my advice she immediately set about mending. But I could easily find she was not earnest in the work; for as she repaired them on one side, they generally broke out on another. Thus, after three or four
 5 attempts, she began to make the ordinary use of the glass in settling her hair.

The company now made room for a woman of learning, who approached with a slow pace and a solemn countenance, which, for her own sake, I could wish had been cleaner. Sir, cried the lady,
 10 flourishing her hand, which held a pinch of snuff, I shall be enraptured by having presented to my view a mind with which I have so long studied to be acquainted: but, in order to give the sex a proper example, I must insist, that all the company be permitted to look over my shoulder. I bowed assent, and presenting the glass,
 15 shewed the lady a mind by no means so fair as she had expected to see. Ill-nature, ill placed pride, and spleen, were too legible to be mistaken. Nothing could be more amusing than the mirth of her female companions who had looked over. They had hated her from the beginning, and now the apartment echoed with an universal
 20 laugh. Nothing but a fortitude like her's could have withstood their raillery: she stood it however; and when the burst was exhausted, with great tranquillity she assured the company, that the whole was a *deceptio visus*, and that she was too well acquainted with her own mind to believe any false representations from another.
 25 Thus saying, she retired with a sullen satisfaction, resolved not to mend her faults, but to write a criticism on the mental reflector.

I must own, by this time I began myself to suspect the fidelity of my mirror; for as the ladies appeared at least to have the merit of rising early, since they were up at five, I was amazed to find
 30 nothing of this good quality pictured upon their minds in the reflection; I was resolved therefore to communicate my suspicions to a lady, whose intellectual countenance appeared more fair than any of the rest, not having above seventy-nine spots in all, besides slips and foibles. I own, young woman, said I, that there are some
 35 virtues upon that mind of your's; but there is still one which I do

1-2 by my advice] 62; *om.* *PL*

9 wish had been cleaner] 62; have wished had been washed *PL*

13 example] 62; example, Sir *PL*

22 she assured] 62; assured *PL*

23 *deceptio visus*] 62; deception *PL*

26 mental reflector] 62; glass *PL*

not see represented; I mean that of rising betimes in the morning; I fancy the glass false in that particular. The young lady smiled at my simplicity; and, with a blush, confessed, that she and the whole company had been up all night gaming.

By this time all the ladies, except one, had seen themselves 5 successively, and disliked the show, or scolded the show-man; I was resolved, however, that she who seemed to neglect herself, and was neglected by the rest, should take a view; and going up to a corner of the room, where she still continued sitting, I presented my glass full in her face. Here it was that I exulted in my success; no blot, 10 no stain, appeared on any part of the faithful mirror. As when the large unwritten page presents its snowy spotless bosom to the writer's hand; so appeared the glass to my view. Here, O ye daughters of English ancestors, cried I, turn hither, and behold an object worthy imitation: look upon the mirror now, and acknowledge its 15 justice, and this woman's pre-eminence! The ladies obeying the summons, came up in a groupe, and, looking on, acknowledged there was some truth in the picture, as the person now represented had been deaf, dumb, and a fool from her cradle.

Thus much of my dream I distinctly remember; the rest was 20 filled with chimæras, enchanted castles, and flying dragons as usual. As you, my dear Fum Hoam, are particularly versed in the interpretation of those midnight warnings, what pleasure should I not find in your explanation: but that our distance prevents; I make no doubt, however, but that from my description you will very much 25 venerate the good qualities of the English ladies in general, since dreams, you know, go always by contraries. Adieu.

4 been] 62; sate *PL*

11 mirror. As] 62; mirror, as *PL*

23-24 not find] *PL*; find 62

24 that] 62; this *PL*

25 from my description you will] 62; you will from my description *PL*

LETTER XLVII.¹

[Misery best relieved by dissipation.]

From Lien Chi Altangi to Hingpo, a slave in Persia.*

YOUR last letters betray a mind seemingly fond of wisdom,
 5 yet tempested up by a thousand various passions. You would
 fondly persuade me that my former lessons still influence your
 conduct, and yet your mind seems not less enslaved than your body.
 Knowledge, wisdom, erudition, arts and elegance what are they, but
 the mere trappings of the mind, if they do not serve to encrease the
 10 happiness of the possessor. A mind rightly instituted in the school
 of philosophy, acquires at once the stability of the oak, and the
 flexibility of the osier. The truest manner of lessening our agonies,
 is to shrink from their pressure, is to confess that we feel them.

The fortitude of European sages is but a dream; for where lies
 15 the merit in being insensible to the strokes of fortune, or in dis-
 sembling our sensibility; if we are insensible, that arises only from
 an happy constitution;² that is a blessing previously granted by
 heaven, and which no art can procure, no institutions improve.

If we dissemble our feelings, we only artificially endeavour to
 20 persuade others that we enjoy privileges which we actually do not
 possess. Thus while we endeavour to appear happy, we feel at once
 all the pangs of internal misery, and all the self-reproaching con-
 sciousness of endeavouring to deceive.

I know but of two sects of philosophers in the world that have
 25 endeavoured to inculcate that fortitude is but an imaginary virtue;
 I mean the followers of Confucius, and those who profess the

* This letter appears to be little more than a rhapsody of sentiments from Confucius.
 Vid. the Latin translation.³

18 art] 62; arts of our own PL improve.] 62; improve. Being merely acciden-
 tal, we can derive no merit from such a qualification; and as justly might boast of our
 birth, exaltation, or beauty. PL

25 endeavoured to . . . imaginary virtue] 62; propagated this doctrine of fortitudes
 being an effectual support PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Thursday, 12 June 1760.

² Goldsmith gives examples of people with such happy constitutions in his essay 'Happiness, in a Great Measure, dependant on Constitution' in the *Bee*, No. II.

³ *Confucius Sinarum philosophus, sive Scientia sinensis latinè exposita* (Paris, 1687). The editor has not examined this work as a source of Goldsmith's letter, which appears to be made up largely of commonplaces of his own age and country. See also Chên Shou-yi, *T'ien Hsia Monthly*, viii (1939), 48, who expresses doubt that Goldsmith was acquainted with Confucius's *Analekts*.

doctrines of Christ. All other sects teach pride under misfortunes; they alone teach humility. Night, says our Chinese philosopher, not more surely follows day, than groans and tears grow out of pain; when misfortunes, therefore, oppress, when tyrants threaten, it is our interest, it is our duty, to fly even to dissipation for support, 5 to seek redress from friendship, to seek redress from that best of friends who loved us into being.

Philosophers, my son, have long declaimed against the passions, as being the source of all our miseries; they are the source of all our misfortunes I own; but they are the source of our pleasures too: 10 and every endeavour of our lives, and all the institutions of philosophy, should tend to this, not to dissemble an absence of passion, but to repel those which lead to vice, by those which direct to virtue.

The soul may be compared to a field of battle, where two armies are ready every moment to encounter; not a single vice but has a 15 more powerful opponent; and not one virtue but may be overborne by a combination of vices. Reason guides the bands of either host, nor can it subdue one passion but by the assistance of another. Thus, as a bark on every side, beset with storms, enjoys a state of rest, so does the mind, when influenced by a just equipoise of the 20 passions, enjoy tranquillity.

I have used such means as my little fortune would admit to procure your freedom. I have lately written to the governor of Argun to pay your ransom, though at the expence of all the wealth I brought with me from China. If we become poor, we shall at least 25 have the pleasure of bearing poverty together; for what is fatigue or famine, when weighed against friendship and freedom. Adieu.

LETTER XLVIII.¹

[The absurdity of persons in high station pursuing employments beneath them, exemplified in a fairy tale.] 30

*From Lien Chi Altangi to ***** merchant in Amsterdam.*

HAPPENING some days ago to call at a painter's to amuse my self, in examining some pictures (I had no design to buy)

5 to fly . . . for support,] 62; *om. PL*

9-10 all our misfortunes] 62; *our misfortunes PL*

32 some days] 62; *a few days PL*

32-33 amuse my self] 62; *be amused PL*

it surprised me to see a young Prince in the working room, dressed in a painter's apron, and assiduously learning the trade. We instantly remembered to have seen each other; and, after the usual compliments, I stood by while he continued to paint on. As every thing
 5 done by the rich is praised, as princes here, as well as in China, are never without followers, three or four persons, who had the appearance of gentlemen, were placed behind to comfort and applaud him at every stroke.

Need I tell, that it struck me with very disagreeable sensations
 10 *to see a youth who, by his station in life, had it in his power to be useful to thousands, thus letting his mind run to waste upon canvas, at the same time fancying himself improving in taste, and filling his rank with proper decorum.*

As seeing an error, and attempting to redress it, are only one and
 15 the same with me, I took occasion, upon his lordship's desiring my opinion of a Chinese scroll, intended for the frame of a picture, to assure him, that a mandarine of China thought a minute acquaintance with such mechanical trifles below his dignity.

This reply raised the indignation of some, and the contempt of
 20 others: I could hear the names of Vandal, Goth, taste, polite arts, delicacy, and fire, repeated in tones of ridicule or resentment. But considering that it was vain to argue against people who had so much to say; without contradicting them, I begged leave to repeat a fairy tale. This request redoubled their laughter; but not easily
 25 abashed at the raillery of boys, I persisted, observing that it would set the absurdity of placing our affections upon trifles, in the strongest point of view, and adding, that it was hoped the moral would compensate for its stupidity. For heaven's sake, cried the great man,

1 Prince] 62; nobleman *PL*

4 on] 62; on as before *PL*

5 princes] 62; Lords *PL*

10-13 *to see . . . proper decorum*] 62; no italics *PL*

12 *at*] 62; though at *PL*

14 only] 62; *om.* *PL*

15 occasion] 62; the opportunity *PL*

18 below] 62; beneath *PL*

19 This] 62; My *PL*

21 and] 62; *om.* *PL*

21-22 But considering that] 62; As *PL*

23 say] 62; say for themselves *PL*

24 fairy] 62; Chinese fairy *PL*

25-27 observing that . . . view, and] 62; *om.* *PL*

28 compensate for its stupidity] 62; recompence the stupidity of the story *PL*
 the great man] 62; his lordship *PL*

washing his brush in water, let us have no morality at present: if we must have a story, let it be without any moral. I pretended not to hear; and while he handled the brush, proceeded as follows.¹

IN the kingdom of Bonbobbin, which, by the Chinese annal, appears to have flourished twenty thousand years ago, there reigned a prince, endowed with every accomplishment which generally distinguishes the sons of kings. His beauty was brighter than the sun. The sun, to which he was nearly related, would sometimes stop his course in order to look down and admire him.

His mind was not less perfect than his body: he knew all things without having ever read; philosophers, poets, and historians, submitted their works to his decision; and so penetrating was he, that he could tell the merit of a book by looking on the cover. He made epic poems, tragedies, and pastorals, with surprising facility; song, epigram, or rebus, was all one to him, tho' it is observed he could never finish an acrostic. In short, the fairy, who presided at his birth, had endowed him with almost every perfection, or what was just the same, his subjects were ready to acknowledge he possessed them all; and, for his own part, he knew nothing to the contrary. A prince so accomplished, received a name suitable to his merit; and he was called Bonbenin bonbobbin bonbobbinet, which signifies *enlightener of the sun*.

As he was very powerful, and yet unmarried, all the neighbouring kings earnestly sought his alliance. Each sent his daughter, dressed out in the most magnificent manner, and with the most sumptuous retinue imaginable, in order to allure the prince: so that at one time there were seen at his court not less than seven hundred foreign

2 be] 62; be in the modern taste, PL

3 he] 62; his lordship PL proceeded as follows.] 62; I proceeded as follows with

The HISTORY of PRINCE BONBENIN and his WHITE MOUSE. PL

8 The sun] 62; The sun itself PL

9 his] 62; its PL

10 all] 62; almost all PL

11 read] 62; learned any thing PL

13 by] 62; merely by PL

15-16 him, tho' . . . an acrostic] 62; him PL

21 Bonbenin bonbobbin bonbobbinet] 62; in PL all one word which] 62; which, in the language of the country, PL

26 imaginable] 62; imaginable, to the court of Bonbobbin PL

27 there] 62; om. PL his] 62; om. PL

¹ For the supposed—though improbable—origin of the story that follows in a personal experience of Goldsmith's concerned with white mice, see Prior's *Life*, i. 370-2.

princesses of exquisite sentiment and beauty, each alone sufficient to make seven hundred ordinary men happy.

Distracted in such a variety, the generous Bonbenin, had he not been obliged by the laws of the empire to make choice of one,
 5 would very willingly have married them all, for none understood gallantry better. He spent numberless hours of solicitude in endeavouring to determine whom he should chuse; one lady was possessed of every perfection, but he disliked her eyebrows; another was brighter than the morning star, but he disapproved her fong
 10 whang; a third did not lay white enough on her cheek; and a fourth did not sufficiently blacken her nails. At last after numberless disappointments on the one side and the other, he made choice of the incomparable Nanhoa, queen of the scarlet dragons.

The preparations for the royal nuptials, or the envy of the dis-
 15 appointed ladies needs no description; both the one and the other were as great as they could be; the beautiful Princess was conducted amidst admiring multitudes to the royal couch, where after being divested of every encumbering ornament, she was placed, in expectation of the youthful bridegroom, who did not keep her long in
 20 expectation. He came more chearful than the morning, and printing on her lips a burning kiss, the attendants took this as a proper signal to withdraw.

Perhaps I ought to have mentioned in the beginning, that, among several other qualifications, the prince was fond of collecting and
 25 breeding mice, which being an harmless pastime, none of his counsellors thought proper to dissuade him from: he therefore kept a great variety of these pretty little animals in the most beautiful cages, enriched with diamonds, rubies, emeralds, pearls, and other precious stones: thus he *innocently* spent four hours each day, in
 30 contemplating their innocent little pastimes.

6 better] 62; better than he *PL*

7 whom] 62; who *PL*

8 eyebrows] 62; father *PL*

15 needs] 62; need *PL*

18-19 in expectance of] 62; expecting *PL*

22 withdraw] 62; retire *PL*

23 in the beginning] 62; before *PL*

26-27 from: he . . . little animals] 62; against: a great variety of these pretty little animals were kept *PL*

28 pearls,] 62; *om.* *PL*

29 *innocently*] 62; *no italics* *PL*

30 little pastimes] 62; amusements *PL*

But to proceed, the Prince and Princess were now in bed; one with all the love and expectation, the other with all the modesty and fear, which is natural to suppose; both willing, yet afraid to begin; when the Prince happening to look towards the outside of the bed, perceived one of the most beautiful animals in the world, 5 a white mouse with green eyes, playing about the floor, and performing an hundred pretty tricks. He was already master of blue mice, red mice, and even white mice with yellow eyes; but a white mouse, with green eyes, was what he long endeavoured to possess: wherefore, leaping from bed with the utmost impatience and agility, the youthful Prince attempted to seize the little charmer, but it was fled in a moment; for alas, the mouse was sent by a discontented Princess, and was itself a fairy.

It is impossible to describe the agony of the Prince upon this occasion. He sought round and round every part of the room, even 15 the bed where the Princess lay was not exempt from the enquiry; he turned the Princess on one side and t'other, stripped her quite naked, but no mouse was to be found; the Princess herself was kind enough to assist, but still to no purpose.

Alas, cried the young Prince in an agony, how unhappy am I to 20 be thus disappointed; never sure was so beautiful an animal seen, I would give half my kingdom and my Princess to him that would find it. The Princess, though not much pleased with the latter part of his offer, endeavoured to comfort him as well as she could; she let him know that he had an hundred mice already, which ought to 25 be at least sufficient to satisfy any philosopher like him. Tho' none of them had green eyes, yet he should learn to thank heaven that they had any eyes at all. She told him, (for she was a profound moralist) that incurable evils must be born, and that useless lamentations were vain, and that man was born to misfortunes; she even 30

1 one] 62; the one *PL*

3 is natural to suppose] 62; so much become each sex *PL* willing, yet] 62; seemed willing, yet either *PL*

5-6 one of . . . green eyes] 62; a white mouse with green eyes, one of the most beautiful animals in the world *PL*

9 possess] 62; be possessed of *PL*

11 charmer] 62; trifier *PL*

12-13 sent by . . . was itself] 62; *om. PL*

17-18 stripped her quite naked,] 62; *om. PL*

19-20 purpose. Alas] 62; purpose; alas *PL*

22-23 would find] 62; should find *PL*

28 any eyes at all] *PL*; eyes 62

entreated him to return to bed, and she would endeavour to lull him on her bosom to repose; but still the Prince continued inconsolable; and regarding her with a stern air, for which his family was remarkable, he vow'd never to sleep in the royal palace,
 5 or indulge himself in the innocent pleasures of matrimony, till he had found the white mouse with the green eyes.

Prithee, Col. Leech, cried his Lordship, interrupting me, how do you like that nose; don't you think there is something of the manner of Rembrandt in it? A prince in all this agony for a white
 10 mouse, O ridiculous! Don't you think, Major Vampyre, that eyebrow stippled very prettily? But pray what are the green eyes to the purpose, except to amuse children? I would give a thousand guineas to lay on the colouring of this cheek more smoothly. But I ask pardon, pray Sir proceed.

15

LETTER XLIX.¹

[The fairy tale continued.]

*From Lien Chi Altangi to ***** merchant in Amsterdam, concluded.*

KINGS, continued I, at that time were different from what they are now; they then never engaged their word for any thing
 20 which they did not rigourously intend to perform. This was the case of Bonbenin, who continued all night to lament his misfortunes to the Princess, who echoed groan for groan. When morning came, he published an edict, offering half his kingdom, and his Princess, to the person who should catch and bring him the white mouse with
 25 green eyes.

The edict was scarce published, when all the traps in the kingdom were baited with cheese; numberless mice were taken and destroyed; but still the much wished for mouse was not among the number. The privy council were assembled more than once to give their
 30 advice; but all their deliberations came to nothing, even though there were two complete vermin-killers and three professed rat-

2 but still] 62; still, however, PL

6 the green] 62; green PL

19 they then] 62; for they then PL

22 groan. When] 62; groan; and, when PL

23 and his] 62; and also his PL

28 wished for] 62; desired PL

31 complete vermin-killers and three professed] 62; om. PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Wednesday, 18 June 1760.

catchers of the number. Frequent addresses, as is usual on extraordinary occasions, were sent from all parts of the empire; but tho' these promised well, tho' in them he received an assurance, that his faithful subjects would assist in his search with their lives and fortunes, yet, with all their loyalty, they failed when the time came 5 that the mouse was to be caught.

The prince therefore was resolved to go himself in search, determined never to lie two nights in one place till he had found what he sought for. Thus quitting his palace without attendants, he set out upon his journey, and travelled through many a desert, and crossed many a river, high over hills, and down along vales, still restless, still enquiring wherever he came; but no white mouse was to be found. 10

As one day, fatigued with his journey, he was shading himself from the heat of the mid-day sun, under the arching branches of a banana tree, meditating on the object of his pursuit, he perceived 15 an old woman, hideously deformed, approaching him; by her stoop, and the wrinkles of her visage, she seemed at least five hundred years old; and the spotted toad was not more freckled than was her skin. Ah! prince Bonbenin-bonbobbins-bonbobbins, cried the 20 creature, what has led you so many thousand miles from your own kingdom; what is it you look for, and what induces you to travel into the Kingdom of Emmets? The prince, who was excessively complaisant, told her the whole story three times over, for she was hard of hearing. Well, says the old fairy, for such she was, I promise 25 to put you in possession of the white mouse with green eyes, and that immediately too, upon one condition. One condition, cried the prince in a rapture; name a thousand, I shall undergo them all with pleasure. Nay, interrupted the old fairy, I ask but one, and that not very mortifying neither; it is only that you instantly consent to 30 marry me.

It is impossible to express the prince's confusion at this demand;

5-6 the time came that] 62; *om. PL*

11 vales] 62; the vales *PL*

12 enquiring] 62; enquiring after the white mouse *PL* white] 62; *om. PL*

20 Bonbenin-bonbobbins-bonbobbins] 62; *in PL all one word*

22 induces you to travel] 62; brings you so far away *PL*

24 complaisant] 62; complaisant every where but at home *PL* for] 62; because *PL*

25 Well] 62; Well then *PL* I] 62; I'll *PL*

28 I shall] 62; and I shall *PL*

30 consent to] 62; *om. PL*

- he loved the mouse, but he detested the bride; he hesitated, he desired time to think upon the proposal, he would have been glad to consult his friends on such an occasion. Nay, nay, cried the odious fairy, if you demur, I retract my promise; I don't desire to
 5 force my favours on any man. Here, you my attendants, cried she, stamping with her foot, let my machine be driven up, Barbacela, Queen of Emmets, is not used to contemptuous treatment. She had no sooner spoken than her fiery chariot appeared in the air, drawn by two snails; and she was just going to step in, when the prince
 10 reflected, that now or never was the time to be possessed of the white mouse; and quite forgetting his lawful Princess Nanhoa, falling on his knees, he implored forgiveness for having rashly rejected so much beauty. This well-timed compliment instantly appeased the angry fairy. She affected an hideous leer of approbation, and, taking
 15 the young prince by the hand, conducted him to a neighbouring church, where they were married together in a moment. As soon as the ceremony was performed, the prince who was to the last degree desirous of seeing his favourite mouse, reminded the bride of her promise. To confess a truth, my Prince, cried she, I myself am that
 20 very white mouse you saw on your wedding night in the royal apartment. I now therefore give you the choice, whether you would have me a mouse by day, and a woman by night, or a mouse by night and a woman by day. Tho' the Prince was an excellent casuist, he was quite at a loss how to determine, but at last thought it most
 25 prudent to have recourse to a blue cat that had followed him from his own dominions, and frequently amused him with its conversation, and assisted him with its advice; in fact this cat was no other than the faithful Princess Nanhoa herself, who had shared with him all his hardships in this disguise.
- 30 By her instructions he was determined in his choice, and returning to the old fairy, prudently observed that as she must have been sensible he had married her, *only for the sake of what she had*, and not for her personal qualifications: he thought it would for several reasons be most convenient, if she continued a woman by day, and
 35 appeared a mouse by night.

1-2 he desired] 62; desired PL

2 he would] 62; adding, that he would PL

4 don't] PL; do not 62

7 Emmets] 62; the Emmets PL

12 he] 62; *om.* PL having] 62; his having PL

18 favourite mouse] 62; little favourite PL

The old fairy was a good deal mortified at her husband's want of gallantry, though she was reluctantly obliged to comply; the day was therefore spent in the most polite amusements, the gentlemen talked smut, the ladies laughed and were angry. At last the happy night drew near, the blue cat still stuck by the side of its master, 5 and even followed him to the bridal apartment. Barbacela entered the chamber, wearing a train fifteen yards long, supported by porcupines, and all over beset with jewels, which served to render her more detestable. She was just stepping into bed to the Prince, forgetting her promise, when he insisted upon seeing her in the 10 shape of a mouse. She had promised, and no fairy can break her word; wherefore assuming the figure of the most beautiful mouse in the world, she skipped and play'd about with an infinity of amusement. The Prince in an agony of rapture, was desirous of seeing his pretty playfellow move a slow dance about the floor to his own 15 singing; he began to sing, and the mouse immediately to perform with the most perfect knowledge of time, and the finest grace and greatest gravity imaginable; it only began, for Nanhoa, who had long waited for the opportunity in the shape of a cat, flew upon it instantly without remorse, and eating it up in the hundredth part 20 of a moment, broke the charm, and then resumed her natural figure.

The Prince now found that he had all along been under the power of enchantment, that his passion for the white mouse was entirely fictitious, and not the genuine complexion of his soul; he now saw that his earnestness after mice was an illiberal amusement, and much 25 more becoming a ratcatcher than a Prince. All his meannesses now stared him in the face, he begged the discreet Princess's pardon an hundred times. The Princess very readily forgave him, and both returning to their palace in Bonbobbin, lived very happily together, and reigned many years with all that wisdom, which, by the story, they appear to have been possessed of; perfectly convinced by their 30

1-2 her husband's want of gallantry] 62; the want of gallantry in her husband's choice *PL*

3 therefore] 62; *om. PL*

4 the ladies] 62; and the ladies *PL*

8 served] 62; only served *PL*

9 detestable. She] 62; detestable; she *PL*

11 mouse] 62; mouse, at the same time regarding her with a look of infinite tenderness *PL*

16 he began . . . mouse immediately] 62; this the mouse immediately began *PL*

21 then] 62; *om. PL*

31 of; perfectly] *PL*; of. Perfectly 62

31-1 (p. 210) by their former adventures] 62; *om. PL*

former adventures that *they who place their affections on trifles at first for amusement, will find those trifles at last become their most serious concern.* Adieu.

LETTER L.¹

5 [An attempt to define what is meant by English liberty.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

ASK an Englishman what nation in the world enjoys most freedom, and he immediately answers, his own. Ask him in what
10 that freedom principally consists, and he is instantly silent. This happy pre-eminence does not arise from the people's enjoying a larger share in legislation than elsewhere; for in this particular several states in Europe excel them; nor does it arise from a greater exemption from taxes, for few countries pay more; it does not
15 proceed from their being restrained by fewer laws, for no people are burthened with so many; nor does it particularly consist in the security of their property, for property is pretty well secured in every polite state of Europe.

How then are the English more free (for more free they certainly
20 are) than the people of any other country, or under any other form of government whatever? Their freedom consists in their enjoying all the advantages of democracy with this superior prerogative borrowed from monarchy, *that the severity of their laws may be relaxed without endangering the constitution.*

25 In a monarchical state, in which the constitution is strongest, the laws may be relaxed without danger; for though the people should be unanimous in the breach of any one in particular, yet still there

2 last] 62; length PL

16 particularly] 62; om. PL

18 polite] 62; polished PL

20-21 country, or . . . of government] 62; country PL

21-23 Their freedom . . . from monarchy] 62; The prerogative which they enjoy above all other Democratic governments is PL

25-3 (p. 211) In a . . . the community.] 62; in PL this par. is placed after the one following.

26 laws] 62; laws on the contrary PL

is an *effective* power superior to the people, capable of enforcing obedience, whenever it may be proper to inculcate the law either towards the support or welfare of the community.

But in all those governments, where laws derive their sanction from the *people alone*, transgressions cannot be overlooked without bringing the constitution into danger. They who transgress the law in such a case, are those who prescribe it, by which means it loses not only its influence but its sanction. In every republic the laws must be strong, because the constitution is feeble: they must resemble an Asiatic husband who is justly jealous, because he knows himself impotent. Thus in Holland, Switzerland, and Genoa, new laws are not frequently enacted, but the old ones are observed with unremitting severity. In such republics therefore the people are slaves to laws of their own making, little less than in unmix'd monarchies where they are slaves to the will of one subject to frailties like themselves.

In England, from a variety of happy accidents, their constitution is just strong enough, or if you will, monarchical enough, to permit a relaxation of the severity of laws, and yet those laws still remain sufficiently strong to govern the people. This is the most perfect state of civil liberty, of which we can form any idea; here we see a greater number of laws than in any other country, while the people at the same time obey only such as are *immediately* conducive to the interests of society; several are unnoticed, many unknown; some kept to be revived and enforced upon proper occasions, others left to grow obsolete, even without the necessity of abrogation.

Scarce an Englishman who does not almost every day of his life, offend with impunity against some express law, and for which in a certain conjuncture of circumstances he would not receive punishment. Gaming houses, preaching at prohibited places, assembled crowds, nocturnal amusements, public shews, and an hundred other

1 *effective*] 62; *no italics PL* superior to the people,] 62; *om. PL*

2 may] 62; should *PL* inculcate] 62; observe *PL*

4 But in] 62; In *PL*

6-8 They who . . . its sanction.] 62; *om. PL*

11 Genoa] 62; Genoa, as I am told *PL*

13 In such] 62; In *PL*, *beginning a new par., which follows the third par. of 62*

14-15 little less . . . monarchies where] 62; and in unmix'd monarchies *PL*

15 subject] 62; who is subject *PL*

17 In] 62; *no par. PL*

18 enough, or . . . monarchical enough,] 62; enough *PL*

19 remain] *PL*; to remain 62

instances are forbid and frequented. These prohibitions are useful; though it be prudent in their magistrates, and happy for their people, that they are not enforced, and none but the venal or mercenary attempt to enforce them.

- 5 The law in this case, like an indulgent parent, still keeps the rod, though the child is seldom corrected. Were those pardoned offences to rise into enormity, were they likely to obstruct the happiness of society, or endanger the state, it is then that justice would resume her terrors, and punish those faults she had so often overlooked with
10 indulgence. It is to this ductility of the laws that an Englishman owes the freedom he enjoys superior to others in a more popular government; every step therefore the constitution takes towards a Democratic form, every diminution of the regal authority is, in fact a diminution of the subjects freedom; but every attempt to render the
15 government more popular, not only impairs natural liberty, but even will at last, dissolve the political constitution.

- Every popular government seems calculated to last only for a time, it grows rigid with age, new laws are multiplying, and the old continue in force, the subjects are oppressed, burthen'd with a multiplicity of legal injunctions, there are none from whom to expect
20 redress, and nothing but a strong convulsion in the state can vindicate them into former liberty; thus the people of Rome, a few great ones excepted, found more real freedom under their Emperors tho' tyrants, than they had experienced in the old age of the common
25 wealth, in which their laws were become numerous and painful, in which new laws were every day enacting and the old ones executed with rigour. They even refused to be reinstated in their former prerogatives, upon an offer made them to this purpose; for they actually found Emperors the only means of softening the rigours of
30 their constitution.

The constitution of England, is at present possessed of the strength

2 their people] 62; the people *PL*

3-5 enforced, and . . . them. The] 62; enforced; the *PL*

6 those pardoned] 62; these small *PL*

10 ductility] 62; happy ductility *PL*

14-16 but every . . . the political] 62; not only so, but is likely to subvert even the *PL*

22 them into former] 62; their *PL*

25 in which their] 62; when their *PL*

25-27 in which new . . . rigour. They] 62; and *PL*

28 upon an . . . this purpose;] 62; *om. PL*

29 Emperors the only means] 62; their Emperors capable *PL*

of its native oak, and the flexibility of the bending tamarisk;¹ but should the people at any time with a mistaken zeal, pant after an imaginary freedom, and fancy that abridging monarchy was en-
creasing their privileges, they would be very much mistaken, since
every jewel plucked from the crown of majesty would only be made
use of as a bribe to corruption; it might enrich the few who shared
it among them, but would in fact impoverish the public.

As the Roman senators by slow and imperceptible degrees became
masters of the people, yet still flattered them with a shew of freedom,
while themselves only were free; so is it possible for a body of men
while they stand up for privileges, to grow into an exuberance of
power themselves, and the public become actually dependent, while
some of its individuals only govern.

If then, my friend, there should in this country, ever be on the
throne a King who, thro' good nature or age, should give up the
smallest part of his prerogative to the people, if there should come
a minister of merit and popularity.—But I have room for no more.
Adieu.

LETTER LI.²

[A Bookseller's visit to the Chinese.]

20

*From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial
Academy at Peking, in China.*

AS I was yesterday seated at breakfast over a pensive dish of tea,
my meditations were interrupted by my old friend and com-
panion, who introduced a stranger, dressed pretty much like him-
self. The gentleman made several apologies for his visit, begged of

¹ and] 62; and its laws of PL

⁵ would] 62; will PL

⁶ it might] 62; tho' it may PL shared] 62; have shared PL

⁷ but would] 62; yet will it PL

¹³ govern] PL; governed 62

¹⁴ be] 62; so be PL

¹⁶ the people] 62; others PL

¹⁷ But] 62; om. PL

¹ For the wording cf. the first paragraph of Letter XLVII above: 'A mind rightly instituted in the school of philosophy, acquires at once the stability of the oak, and the flexibility of the osier.'

² In the *Public Ledger* for Monday, 23 June 1760.

me to impute his intrusion to the sincerity of his respect, and the warmth of his curiosity.

As I am very suspicious of my company, when I find them very civil, without any apparent reason, I answered the stranger's caresses
 5 at first with reserve, which my friend perceiving, instantly let me into my visitant's trade and character, asking Mr. Fudge whether he had lately published any thing new? I now conjectured that my guest was no other than a bookseller, and his answer confirmed my suspicions.¹

10 Excuse me Sir, says he, it is not the season, books have their time as well as cucumbers; I would no more bring out a new work in summer, than I would sell pork in the dog days. Nothing in my way goes off in summer, except very light goods indeed. A review, a magazine, or a sessions paper, may amuse a summer reader; but all
 15 our stock of value we reserve for a spring and winter trade. *I must confess Sir, says I, a curiosity to know what you call a valuable stock, which can only bear a winter perusal.* Sir, reply'd the bookseller, it is not my way to cry up my own goods, but without exaggeration I will venture to shew with any of the trade, my books at least have
 20 the peculiar advantage of being always new; and it is my way to clear off my old to the trunkmakers every season. I have ten new title pages now about me, which only want books to be added to make them the finest things in nature. Others may pretend to direct the vulgar, but that is not my way; I always let the vulgar direct me;
 25 wherever popular clamour arises, I always eccho the million. For instance, should the people in general say that such a man is a rogue, I instantly give orders to set him down in print a villain; thus every man buys the book, not to learn new sentiments, but to have the pleasure of seeing his own reflected. *But Sir, interrupted I, you speak*
 30 *as if you yourself wrote the books you publish; may I be so bold as to ask a sight of some of those intended publications which are shortly to surprize the world.* As to that, Sir, reply'd the talkative bookseller, I only draw out the plans myself; and though I am very cautious of communicating them to any, yet as in the end I have a favour to ask,

4 any] 62; an PL

11 cucumbers;] PL; cucumbers. 62

¹ The idea of the conversation that follows may possibly have been suggested by the conversation of a Chinese and a bookseller in Paris, in d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises*, lettre lviii (ii. 289-96).

you shall see a few of them. Here, Sir, here they are diamonds of the first water, I assure you. Imprimis, A translation of several medical precepts for the use of such physicians as do not understand Latin. Item, the young clergyman's art of placing patches regularly, with a dissertation on the different manner of smiling without dis- 5 torting the face. Item, the whole art of love made perfectly easy, by a broker of 'Change Alley. Item, the proper manner of cutting black-lead pencils, and making crayons; by the Right Hon. the Earl of ***. Item, the muster master General, or the review of reviews—*Sir*, cry'd I, interrupting him, *my curiosity with regard to title pages is satisfied, I should be glad to see some longer manuscript, an history, or an epic poem.*—Bless me, cries the man of industry, now you speak of an epic poem, you shall see an excellent farce. Here it is, dip into it where you will, it will be found replete with true modern humour. Strokes, *Sir*, it is fill'd with strokes of wit and satire in 15 every line. *Do you call these dashes of the pen strokes, reply'd I, for I must confess I can see no other?* And pray *Sir*, returned he, what do you call them? Do you see any thing good now a-days that is not filled with strokes—and dashes?—*Sir*, a well placed dash makes half the wit of our writers of modern humour. I bought last season, a 20 piece that had no other merit upon earth than nine hundred and ninety-five breaks, seventy-two ha ha's, three good things and a garter. And yet it play'd off, and bounced, and cracked, and made more sport than a fire-work. *I fancy then, Sir, you were a considerable gainer?* It must be owned the piece did pay; but upon the whole I 25 can't much boast of last winter's success; I gain'd by two murders, but then I lost by an ill timed charity sermon. I was a considerable sufferer by my direct road to an estate, but the infernal guide brought me up again. Ah, *Sir*, that was a piece touch'd off by the hand of a master, filled with good things from one end to the other. The 30 author had nothing but the jest in view; no dull moral lurking beneath, nor ill-natured satyr to sour the readers good humour; he wisely considered that moral and humour at the same time were quite over doing the business. *To what purpose was the book then published, cried I?* *Sir*, the book was published in order to be sold; 35 and no book sold better, except the criticisms upon it, which came out soon after. Of all kinds of writing that goes off best at present,

9 reviews—] 62; reviews. Item, *PL*

23 garter] 62; caster *PL*

26 can't] *PL*; cannot 62

and I generally fasten a criticism upon every selling book that is published.

I once had an author who never left the least opening for the critics: close was the word, always very right, and very dull, ever
 5 on the safe side of an argument; yet, with all his qualifications, incapable of coming into favour. I soon perceived that his bent was for criticism; and as he was good for nothing else, supplied him with pens and paper, and planted him at the beginning of every month as a censor on the works of others. In short, I found him a
 10 treasure, no merit could escape him, but what is most remarkable of all, he ever wrote best and bitterest when drunk. *But are there not some works, interrupted I, that from the very manner of their composition must be exempt from criticism, particularly such as profess to disregard its laws.* There is no work whatsoever but he can criticise,
 15 replied the bookseller; even though you wrote in Chinese he would have a pluck at you. Suppose you should take it into your head to publish a book, let it be a volume of Chinese letters for instance; write how you will, he shall shew the world you could have written better. Should you, with the most local exactness, stick to the
 20 manners and customs of the country from whence you come; should you confine yourself to the narrow limits of eastern knowledge, and be perfectly simple, and perfectly natural, he has then the strongest reason to exclaim. He may with a sneer send you back to China for readers. He may observe, that after the first or second letter the
 25 iteration of the same simplicity is insupportably tedious; but the worst of all is, the public in such a case will anticipate his censures, and leave you with all your uninformative simplicity to be mauled at discretion.

Yes, cried I, *but, in order to avoid his indignation, and what I should*
 30 *fear more, that of the public, I would in such a case write with all the knowledge I was master of. As I am not possessed of much learning, at least I would not suppress what little I had, nor would I appear more stupid than nature made me.* Here then, cried the bookseller, we should have you entirely in our power, unnatural, uneastern, quite
 35 out of character; erroneously sensible would be the whole cry; Sir,

1 selling] 62; silly PL

23 exclaim. He] 62; exclaim; he PL

29 cried I, but] 62; but, cried I PL

31 of. As] 62; of, as PL

33 cried] PL; cries 62

34 unnatural,] 62; unnatural PL

we should then hunt you down like a rat. *Head of my father!* said I, *sure there are but the two ways; the door must either be shut, or it must be open. I must either be natural or be unnatural.* Be what you will, we shall criticise you, returned the bookseller, and prove you a dunce in spite of your teeth. But, Sir, it is time that I should come 5 to business. I have just now in the press an history of China; and if you will but put your name to it as the author, I shall repay the obligation with gratitude. *What, Sir,* replied I, *put my name to a work which I have not written. Never while I retain a proper respect for the public and myself.* The bluntness of my reply quite abated the ardour 10 of the bookseller's conversation; and, after about half an hour's disagreeable reserve, he with some ceremony took his leave and withdrew. Adieu.

LETTER LII.¹

[The impossibility of distinguishing men in England, by their dress. Two 15 instances of this.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

IN all other countries, my dear Fum Hoam, the rich are distinguished by their dress. In Persia, China, and most parts of 20 Europe, those who are possessed of much gold or silver, put some of it upon their cloaths; but in England, those who carry much upon their cloaths, are remarked for having but little in their pockets. A tawdry outside is regarded as a badge of poverty, and those who can sit at home, and glote over their thousands in silent satisfaction, are 25 generally found to do it in plain cloaths.²

This diversity of thinking from the rest of the world which prevails here, I was first at a loss to account for; but am since informed

3 or be] *PL*; or 62

8-10 *What, Sir . . . and myself*] 62; no italics *PL*

21 put] 62; clap *PL*

23 for having] 62; to have *PL*

25 in silent] 62; with silent *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 24 June 1760.

² The Abbé Le Blanc has a letter on the plainness of English dress; see *Letters on the French and English Nations* (1747), i. 16-22.

that it was introduced by an intercourse between them and their neighbours the French; who, whenever they came in order to pay those islanders a visit, were generally very well dressed, and very poor, daubed with lace, but all the gilding on the outside. By this
 5 means laced cloaths have been brought so much into contempt, that at present even their Mandarinines are ashamed of finery.

I must own myself a convert to English simplicity; I am no more for ostentation of wealth than of learning; the person who in company should pretend to be wiser than others, I am apt to regard as
 10 illiterate and ill bred; the person whose cloaths are extremely fine, I am too apt to consider, as not being possessed of any superiority of fortune, but resembling those Indians who are found to wear all the gold they have in the world in a bob at the nose.

I was lately introduced into a company of the best dressed men I
 15 have seen since my arrival. Upon entering the room, I was struck with awe, at the grandeur of the different dresses. That personage, thought I, in blue and gold, must be some Emperor's son; that in green and silver, a Prince of the blood; he in embroidered scarlet, a prime minister; all first rate noblemen, I suppose, and well looking
 20 noblemen too. I sate for some time with that uneasiness, which conscious inferiority produces in the ingenuous mind, all attention to their discourse. However, I found their conversation more vulgar than I could have expected from personages of such distinction: if these, thought I to myself be Princes, they are the most stupid
 25 Princes I have ever conversed with; yet still I continued to venerate their dress; for dress has a kind of mechanical influence on the mind.

My friend in black indeed did not behave with the same deference, but contradicted the finest of them all in the most peremptory tones of contempt. But I had scarce time to wonder at the imprudence of
 30 his conduct, when I found occasion to be equally surprized at the absurdity of theirs; for upon the entry of a middle aged man, dressed in a cap, dirty shirt and boots; the whole circle seemed diminished

1 an] 62; the *PL*

8 ostentation] 62; an ostentation *PL*

9 regard] 62; *om. PL*

11 consider] 62; regard *PL*

13 a bob at the nose] 62; bobs at their noses *PL*

16 the different] 62; their different *PL*

25 have] 62; *om. PL*

26 dress; for . . . the mind] 62; dress *PL*

27 My] 62; *no par. PL*

29 But I] 62; I *PL*, with *par.*

of their former importance, and contended who should be first to pay their obeysance to the stranger. They somewhat resembled a circle of Kalmucs offering incense to a bear.

Eager to know the cause of so much seeming contradiction, I whispered my friend out of the room, and found that the august 5 company consisted of no other than a dancing master, two fiddlers, and a third rate actor, all assembled in order to make a set at country dances, as the middle-aged gentleman whom I saw enter was a squire from the country, and desirous of learning the new manner of foot- 10 ing, and smoothing up the rudiments of his rural minuet.

I was no longer surprized at the authority which my friend assumed among them, nay, was even displeased (pardon my eastern education) that he had not kick'd every creature of them down stairs. "What, said I, shall a set of such paltry fellows dress themselves up 15 like sons of kings, and claim even the transitory respect of half an hour. There should be some law to restrain so manifest a breach of privilege; they should go from house to house, as in China, with the instruments of their profession strung round their necks; by this means we might be able to distinguish and treat them in a stile 20 of becoming contempt." Hold, my friend, replied my companion, were your reformation to take place, as dancing masters and fidlers now mimic gentlemen in appearance, we should then find our fine gentlemen conforming to theirs. A beau might be introduced to a lady of fashion with a fiddle case hanging at his neck by a red ribbon; and, instead of a cane, might carry a fiddle stick. Tho' to be as dull 25 as a first rate dancing master might be used with proverbial justice; yet, dull as he is, many a fine gentleman sets him up as the proper standard of politeness, copies not only the pert vivacity of his air, but the flat insipidity of his conversation. In short, if you make a law against dancing masters imitating the fine gentleman, you should 30 with as much reason enact, That no fine gentleman shall imitate the dancing master.

After I had left my friend, I made towards home, reflecting as I went upon the difficulty of distinguishing men by their appearance. Invited, however, by the freshness of the evening, I did not re- 35 turn directly, but went to ruminate on what had passed in a public

8 dances, as] 62; dances. As *PL* middle-aged] 62; grown *PL* enter was] 62; enter, *PL*

9 and desirous] 62; was desirous *PL*

11 I was] 62; I was now *PL*

34 appearance] 62; appearances *PL*

garden belonging to the city. Here, as I sate upon one of the benches, and felt the pleasing sympathy which nature in bloom inspires, a disconsolate figure, who sate on t'other end of the seat, seem'd no way to enjoy the serenity of the season.

5 His dress was miserable beyond description; a thread-bare coat of the rudest materials; a shirt, though clean, yet extremely coarse; hair that seemed to have been long unconscious of the comb; and all the rest of his equipage impressed with the marks of genuine poverty.

10 As he continued to sigh, and testify every symptom of despair, I was naturally led, from a motive of humanity, to offer comfort and assistance. You know my heart; and that all who are miserable may claim a place there. The pensive stranger at first declined any conversation; but at last, perceiving a peculiarity in my accent and
15 manner of thinking, he began to unfold himself by degrees.

I now found that he was not so very miserable as he at first appeared; upon my offering him a small piece of money, he refused my favour, yet without appearing displeased at my intended generosity. 'Tis true he sometimes interrupted the conversation with
20 a sigh, and talked pathetically of neglected merit; yet still I could perceive a serenity in his countenance, that, upon a closer inspection, bespoke inward content.

Upon a pause in the conversation I was going to take my leave, when he begged I would favour him with my company home to
25 supper. I was surprized at such a demand from a person of his appearance; but willing to indulge curiosity, I accepted his invitation; and though I felt some repugnance at being seen with one who appeared so very wretched, went along with seeming alacrity.

Still as he approached nearer home, his good humour proportionably seemed to encrease. At last he stopped, not at the gate of
30 an hovel, but of a magnificent palace! When I cast my eyes upon all the sumptuous elegance which every where presented upon entering, and then when I looked at my seemingly miserable conductor, I could scarce think that all this finery belonged to him;

3 t'other] *PL*; the other *62*

15 he] *62*; *om. PL*

17 appeared] *62*; appeared to be *PL*

19 'Tis] *PL*; It is *62*

29-30 proportionably seemed to encrease. At] *62*; seemed to encrease in proportion; and at *PL*

33 seemingly] *PL*; seeming *62*

34 scarce] *62*; scarcely *PL*

yet in fact it did. Numerous servants ran through the apartments with silent assiduity; several ladies of beauty and magnificently dressed came to welcome his return; a most elegant supper was provided; in short, I found the person, whom a little before I had sincerely pitied, to be in reality a most refined epicure; *One who* 5
courted contempt abroad, in order to feel with keener gust the pleasure of pre-eminence at home. Adieu.

LETTER LIII.¹

[The absurd taste for obscene and pert novels, such as Tristram Shandy, ridiculed.] 10

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

HOW often have we admired the eloquence of Europe! That strength of thinking, that delicacy of imagination, even beyond the efforts of the Chinese themselves. How were we enraptured with those bold figures which sent every sentiment with force to the heart. How have we spent whole days together in learning those arts by which European writers got within the passions, and led the reader as if by enchantment. 15

But though we have learned most of the rhetorical figures of the last age, yet there seems to be one or two of great use here, which have not yet travelled to China. The figures I mean are called *Bawdy* and *Pertness*; none are more fashionable; none so sure of admirers; they are of such a nature, that the merest blockhead, by a proper use of them, shall have the reputation of a wit; they lie level to the meanest capacities, and address those passions which all have, or would be ashamed to disown. 25

It has been observed, and I believe with some truth, that it is very

3 came] 62; ran PL:

13 often] often, my friend, PL; often, 62

17 heart] 62; soul PL

21 yet] 62; tho' we are no strangers to the Catachresis, the Epianadiplosis, the Aposiopesis, and the rest of them; yet PL

22-23 The figures . . . *Pertness*; none] 62; What may perhaps be still more amazing is, that no figures PL

27 disown.] 62; disown. The figures I mean, are called *Baudy* and *Pertness*. PL

28 observed] 62; often observed PL

difficult for a dunce to obtain the reputation of a wit; yet by the assistance of the figure *Baudy*, this may be easily effected, and a bawdy blockhead often passes for a fellow of smart parts and pretensions. Every object in nature helps the jokes forward, without
 5 scarce any effort of the imagination. If a lady stands, something very good may be said upon that, if she happens to fall, with the help of a little fashionable Pruriency, there are forty sly things ready on the occasion. But a prurient jest has always been found to give most pleasure to a few very old gentlemen, who being in some measure
 10 dead to other sensations, feel the force of the allusion with double violence on the organs of risibility.

An author who writes in this manner is generally sure therefore of having the very old and the impotent among his admirers; for these he may properly be said to write, and from these he ought to
 15 expect his reward, his works being often a very proper succedaneum to cantharides, or an *assa fœtida* pill. His pen should be considered in the same light as the squirt of an apothecary, both being directed to the same generous end.

But though this manner of writing be perfectly adapted to the
 20 taste of gentlemen and ladies of fashion here, yet still it deserves greater praise in being equally suited to the most vulgar apprehensions. The very ladies and gentlemen of Benin, or Cafraria, are in this respect tolerably polite, and might relish a prurient joke of this kind with critical propriety; probably too with higher gust, as they
 25 wear neither breeches nor petticoats to intercept the application.

It is certain I never could have expected the ladies here, biassed as they are by education, capable at once of bravely throwing off their prejudices, and not only applauding books in which this figure

2-4 effected, and . . . and pretensions] 62; effected *PL*

4 jokes] 62; joke *PL*

5-6 stands, something . . . happens to] 62; happens to stand, or *PL*

7 there are . . . things ready] 62; something good may be said *PL*

8 But a prurient jest] 62; If a gentleman should leap or run, still the figure may be easily applied.

By the use of this in common conversation, I never knew a dunce that could not make the company laugh whenever he thought proper; but it *PL*

10 allusion] 62; jest *PL*

17 light] 62; useful light *PL*

18 end] 62; ends *PL*

19 But though] 62; Though *PL*

23 and might] 62; can *PL*

24 probably] 62; and probably *PL*

26 never could] 62; could never *PL*

makes the only merit, but even adopting it in their own conversation. Yet so it is, the pretty innocents now carry those books openly in their hands, which formerly were hid under the cushion; they now lisp their double meanings with so much grace, and talk over the raptures they bestow with such little reserve, that I am sometimes 5 reminded of a custom among the entertainers in China, who think it a piece of necessary breeding to whet the appetites of their guests, by letting them smell dinner in the kitchen before it is served up to table.

The veneration we have for many things, entirely proceeds from 10 their being carefully concealed. Were the idolatrous Tartar permitted to lift the veil which keeps his idol from view, it might be a certain method to cure his future superstition; with what a noble spirit of freedom therefore must that writer be possessed, who bravely paints things as they are, who lifts the veil of modesty, who 15 displays the most hidden recesses of the temple, and shews the erring people that the object of their vows is either perhaps a mouse, or a monkey.

However, though this figure be at present so much in fashion; though the professors of it are so much caressed by the great, those 20 perfect judges of literary excellence; yet it is confessed to be only a revival of what was once fashionable here before. There was a time, when by this very manner of writing, the gentle Tom. Durfey, as I read in English authors, acquired his great reputation, and became the favourite of a King.¹ The works of this original genius, tho' they 25 never travelled abroad to China, and scarce have reach'd posterity at home, were once found upon every fashionable toilet, and made the subject of polite, I mean very polite conversation. "*Has your Grace seen Mr. Durfey's last new thing, the Oylet Hole. A most facetious piece?*" "*Sure, my Lord, all the world must have seen it; Durfey* 30

6 the entertainers] 62; some entertainers PL

8 before] 62; long before PL

12 lift] 62; lift up PL

15 who lifts the veil of modesty,] 62; om. PL

17 the object of their vows] 62; what they offer incense to, PL

19 However, though] 62; Though PL

25 The] PL; par. 62

26 have] 62; om. PL

¹ Prior compares the *Guardian*, No. 67, for 28 May 1713: 'I my self remember King Charles the Second leaning on Tom d'Urfey's Shoulder more than once, and humming over a Song with him.' On Durfey's popularity see Alexander Pope's letter to Henry Cromwell dated 10 April 1710.

is certainly the most comical creature alive. It is impossible to read his things and live. Was there ever any thing so natural and pretty, as when the Squire and Bridget meet in the cellar. And then the difficulties they both find in broaching the beer barrel, are so arch and so ingenious, we
 5 *have certainly nothing of this kind in the language."* In this manner they spoke then, and in this manner they speak now; for though the successor of Durfey does not excel him in wit, the world must confess he out-does him in obscenity.

There are several very dull fellows, who, by a few mechanical
 10 helps, sometimes learn to become extremely brilliant and pleasing; with a little dexterity in the management of the eye-brows, fingers, and nose. By imitating a cat, a sow and pigs; by a loud laugh, and a slap on the shoulder, the most ignorant are furnished out for conversation. But the writer finds it impossible to throw his winks, his
 15 shrugs, or his attitudes upon paper; he may borrow some assistance indeed, by printing his face at the title page; but without wit to pass for a man of ingenuity, no other mechanical help but downright obscenity will suffice. By speaking to some peculiar sensations, we are always sure of exciting laughter; for the jest does not lie in the
 20 writer, but in the subject.

But Bawdry is often helped on by another figure, called Pertness: and few indeed are found to excell in one that are not possessed of the other.

As in common conversation, the best way to make the audience
 25 laugh, is by first laughing yourself; so in writing, the properest manner is to shew an attempt at humour, which will pass upon most for humour in reality. To effect this, readers must be treated with the most perfect familiarity: in one page the author is to make them a low bow, and in the next to pull them by the nose: he must talk

4 beer barrel] 62; wine cask PL ingenious, we] PL; ingenious! We 62

5 this] 62; the PL

7 successor of Durfey does] 62; successors of Durfey do PL

8 he out-does] 62; they out-do PL

12 nose] 62; nose, many a wag has extended his reputation over half a street PL

14 But the writer] 62; In a comparison there are thus many helps to festivity, but the writer is unfortunately destitute of them all; he PL

16 but] 62; but still PL

17-18 ingenuity, no . . . will suffice.] 62; ingenuity; several other mechanical helps are absolutely necessary. Nothing in this case can be so useful as the figure in question.
 PL

20 subject] 62; subject he has chosen PL

21 Bawdry is often] 62; this manner is defective, unless PL

26 attempt] 62; aim PL

in riddles, and then send them to bed in order to dream for the solution. He must speak of himself and his chapters, and his manner, and what he would be at, and his own importance, and his mother's importance with the most un pitying prolixity, now and then testifying his contempt for all but himself, smiling without a jest, and without wit possessing vivacity.¹ Adieu.

LETTER LIV.²

[The character of an important trifler.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

10

THO' naturally pensive, yet I am fond of gay company, and take every opportunity of thus dismissing the mind from duty. From this motive I am often found in the centre of a crowd; and wherever pleasure is to be sold, am always a purchaser.³ In those places, without being remarked by any, I join in whatever goes forward, work my passions into a similitude of frivolous earnestness, shout as they shout, and condemn as they happen to disapprove. A mind thus sunk for a while below its natural standard, is qualified for stronger flights, as those first retire who would spring forward with greater vigour.

20

Attracted by the serenity of the evening, my friend and I lately went to gaze upon the company in one of the public walks near the city. Here we sauntered together for some time, either praising the beauty of such as were handsome, or the dresses of such as had

3-4 and his own . . . mother's importance] 62; *om. PL*

4-5 now and then testifying] 62; and now and then testify *PL*

5 but himself,] 62; the world beside. Ever *PL*

6 possessing vivacity] 62; possessed of vivacity, he may use what freedoms he thinks proper, provided he now and then throws out an hint of being too contemptible for resentment *PL*

7-10 LETTER LIV . . . in *China*.] ESSAY X. 65, 66

21 my] *PL*, 62; a 65, 66

¹ Although *Tristram Shandy* is mentioned only in the Table of Contents added to the collected edition of 1762, it is clear from this paragraph that Goldsmith had Sterne's novel particularly in mind from the beginning.

² In the *Public Ledger* for Wednesday, 2 July 1760.

³ Cf. Goldsmith's 'Memoirs of M. de Voltaire' (probably written by the beginning of 1759): 'Wherever pleasure was to be sold, our young poet and his mistress were first to raise the auction.'

nothing else to recommend them. We had gone thus deliberately forward for some time, when my friend stopping on a sudden, caught me by the elbow, and led me out of the public walk; I could perceive by the quickness of his pace, and by his frequently looking behind,
 5 that he was attempting to avoid somebody who followed; we now turned to the right, then to the left; as we went forward he still went faster, but in vain; the person whom he attempted to escape, hunted us through every doubling, and gained upon us each moment; so that at last we fairly stood still, resolving to face what we could not
 10 avoid.

Our pursuer soon came up, and joined us with all the familiarity of an old acquaintance. *My dear Drybone*, cries he, shaking my friend's hand, *where have you been hiding this half a century? Positively I had fancied you were gone down to cultivate matrimony and your*
 15 *estate in the country.* During the reply, I had an opportunity of surveying the appearance of our new companion. His hat was pinch'd up with peculiar smartness; his looks were pale, thin, and sharp; round his neck he wore a broad black ribbon, and in his bosom a buckle studded with glass; his coat was trimmed with tarnish'd
 20 twist; he wore by his side a sword with a black hilt, and his stockings of silk, though newly wash'd, were grown yellow by long service. I was so much engaged with the peculiarity of his dress, that I attended only to the latter part of my friend's reply, in which he complimented Mr. Tibbs on the taste of his cloaths, and the bloom in
 25 his countenance. *Psha, psha, Will*, cried the figure, *no more of that if you love me, you know I hate flattery, on my soul I do; and yet to be sure an intimacy with the great will improve one's appearance, and a course of venison will fatten; and yet faith I despise the great as much as you do; but there are a great many damn'd honest fellows among them;*
 30 *and we must not quarrel with one half, because the other wants breeding. If they were all such as my Lord Mudler, one of the most good-natured creatures that ever squeez'd a lemon; I should myself, be among the number of their admirers. I was yesterday to dine at the Dutchess of Piccadilly's,*

2 my friend . . . a sudden,] 65, 66; stopping on a sudden, my friend PL, 62

4 the quickness of his] 62-66; his accelerated PL

8 each] 62-66; every PL

9 at last we] 62-66; we at last PL

12 *Drybone*] PL, 62; Charles 65, 66

16 companion. His] 65, 66; companion; his PL, 62

25 countenance.] 65, 66; countenance, PL, 62 Will] PL, 62; Charles 65, 66

30 breeding] 65, 66; weeding PL, 62

33 *Piccadilly's*,] PL, 62; *Piccadilly's*. 65, 66

My Lord was there. Ned, says he to me, Ned, says he, I'll hold gold to silver I can tell where you were poaching last night. Poaching my Lord, says I; faith you have missed already; for I staid at home, and let the girls poach for me. That's my way; I take a fine woman as some animals do their prey; stand still, and swoop, they fall into my mouth. 5

Ah, Tibbs thou art an happy fellow, cried my companion with looks of infinite pity, I hope your fortune is as much improved as your understanding in such company? *Improved*, replied the other; *You shall know,—but let it go no further,—a great secret—five hundred a year to begin with.—My Lord's word of honour for it—His Lordship* 10 *took me down in his own chariot yesterday, and we had a tete-a-tete dinner in the country; where we talked of nothing else. I fancy you forget sir, cried I, you told us but this moment of your dining yesterday in town! Did I say so, replied he, coolly, to be sure if I said so; it was so —Dined in town; egad now I do remember, I did dine in town; but I* 15 *dined in the country too; for you must know my boys I eat two dinners. By the bye, I am grown as nice as the Devil in my eating. I'll tell you a pleasant affair about that, we were a select party of us to dine at Lady Grogam's, an affected piece, but let it go no farther; a secret: well, says I, I'll hold a thousand guineas, and say done first, that—But dear Dry-* 20 *bone, you are an honest creature, lend me half-a-crown for a minute or two, or so, just till—but hearkee, ask me for it the next time we meet or it may be twenty to one but I forget to pay you.*

When he left us, our conversation naturally turned upon so extraordinary a character. His very dress, cries my friend, is not less 25 extraordinary than his conduct. If you meet him this day you find him in rags, if the next in embroidery. With those persons of distinction, of whom he talks so familiarly, he has scarce a coffee-house acquaintance. However, both for the interests of society, and perhaps for his own, heaven has made him poor, and while all the world 30

2 night. Poaching] 62–66; night: poaching PL

3 missed] 62–66; missed it PL

5 they fall] 62–66; she falls PL

9 further] PL–65; farther 66

12 where we . . . nothing else] 62; no italics PL 12–13 forget] PL, 62; forgot 65, 66

14 coolly, to] PL, 62; coolly. "To 65, 66

19 secret:] 62–66; secret, PL well] 65, 66; well, there [there PL] happened to be no Assa-fatida in the sauce to a turkey, upon which PL, 62

20–21 Dry-bone] PL, 62; Charles 65, 66

23 to pay you] 62–66; om. PL

24 left] 62–66; had left PL

29 However, both] 62–66; Both PL the interests] PL, 65; interests 62; the interest 66

perceive his wants he fancies them concealed from every eye. An agreeable companion because he understands flattery, and all must be pleased with the first part of his conversation though all are sure of its ending with a demand on their purse. While his youth coun-
 5 tenances the levity of his conduct he may thus earn a precarious subsistence, but when age comes on, the gravity of which is incompatible with buffoonery, then will he find himself forsaken by all. Condemned in the decline of life to hang upon some rich family whom he once despised, there to undergo all the ingenuity of studied
 10 contempt, to be employed only as a spy upon the servants, or a bug-bear to fright the children into duty.¹ Adieu.

LETTER LV.²

[His character continued: With that of his wife, his house, and furniture.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial
 15 Academy at Pekin in China.

I AM apt to fancy I have contracted a new acquaintance, whom it will be no easy matter to shake off. My little beau yesterday overtook me again in one of the public walks, and slapping me on the shoulder, saluted me with an air of the most perfect familiarity.
 20 His dress was the same as usual, except that he had more powder in his hair, wore a dirtier shirt, and had on a pair of temple spectacles, with his hat under his arm.

As I knew him to be an harmless amusing little thing, I could not

1 perceive] *PL*, 62; perceives 65, 66

8 some rich family] 62-66; the family of some rich relation *PL*

9 to undergo] 62-66; will he undergo *PL*

10 to be] 62-66; be *PL*

11 the children] *PL*, 62; children 65, 66 duty] 65, 66; good humour *PL*;
 obedience 62 Adieu.] *PL*, 62; *om.* 65, 66

12-15 LETTER LV . . . in China.] ESSAY XI. 65, 66

16-17 I AM . . . will be] *PL*, 62; THERE are some acquaintances whom it is 65, 66

17 My little beau yesterday] 62-66; The little shabby beau I described in one of my former letters, again *PL*

18 again] 62-66; alone *PL*

21 a dirtier shirt] 62-66; dirtier linen *PL* and had on] 65, 66; *om.* *PL*, 62

22 with] 66; and *PL*-65

23 little thing] 62-66; creature *PL*

¹ Concerning Beau Tibbs, John Forster says: 'It is supposed that this exquisite sketch had a living original in one of Goldsmith's casual acquaintance; a person named Thornton, once in the army' (*The Life and Adventures of Oliver Goldsmith* [1848], p. 231).

² In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 1 August 1760.

return his smiles with any degree of severity; so we walked forward on terms of the utmost intimacy, and in a few minutes discussed all the usual topics of a general conversation.

The oddities that marked his character, however, soon began to appear; he bowed to several well dressed persons, who by their manner of returning the compliment, appeared perfect strangers. At intervals he drew out a pocket book, seeming to take memorandums before all the company, with much importance and assiduity. In this manner he led me through the length of the whole Mall, fretting at his absurdities, and fancying myself laughed at as well as he by every spectator.

When we were got to the end of our procession, *blast me*, cries he, with an air of vivacity, *I never saw the park so thin in my life before; there's no company at all to day. Not a single face to be seen.* No company, interrupted I peevishly; no company where there is such a crowd; why man, there's too much. What are the thousands that have been laughing at us but company! *Lord, my dear, returned he, with the utmost good humour, you seem immensely chagrined; but, blast me, when the world laughs at me, I laugh at the world, and so we are even. My Lord Trip, Bill Squash, the Creolian, and I sometimes make a party at being ridiculous. But I see you are grave, so if you are for a fine grave sentimental companion, you shall dine with my wife, I must insist on't; I'll introduce you to Mrs. Tibbs, a Lady of as elegant qualifications as any in nature; she was bred, but that's between ourselves, under the inspection of the Countess of Shoreditch. A charming*

2 terms] 62-66; the terms *PL*

3 of a general] 66; preliminary to particular *PL-65*

6-7 strangers. At intervals he] 62-66; strangers, and at intervals *PL*

9 Mall] 65, 66; walk *PL*, 62

10 as well as he] 65, 66; *om. PL*; not less than him 62

13 park] 62-66; people *PL*

15-16 no company . . . crowd; why] 62; why *PL*; no company . . . crowd! Why 65, 66

16 there's] *PL*, 62; there is 65, 66 are] 62-66; is *PL* thousands] 65, 66; thousand *PL*, 62

17 have] 62-66; has *PL*

18-19 chagrined; but, blast me, when] 62-66; chagrined. When *PL*

19 I laugh] 62-66; why I laugh *PL*

21 ridiculous] 66; ridiculous, and so we say and do a thousand foolish things for the joke sake, all which is nothing *PL*; ridiculous; and so we say and do a thousand things for the joke sake 62, 65 so] 66; and *PL-65*

22 fine grave] 62-66; fine *PL* my wife] 66; me to day *PL*; me and my wife to day 62; my wife to day 65

23 Mrs.] 62-66; my spouse, Mrs. *PL*

25 Shoreditch] 65, 66; All-night *PL*, 62

body of voice, but no more of that, she shall give us a song. You shall see my little girl too, Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia¹ Tibbs, a sweet pretty creature; I design her for my Lord Drumstick's eldest son, but that's in friendship, let it go no farther; she's but six years old, and yet she walks
 5 *a minuet, and plays on the guittar immensely already. I intend she shall be as perfect as possible in every accomplishment. In the first place I'll make her a scholar; I'll teach her Greek myself, and I intend to learn that language purposely to instruct her, but let that be a secret.*

Thus saying, without waiting for a reply, he took me by the arm
 10 and haul'd me along. We passed through many dark alleys and winding ways. From some motives to me unknown, he seemed to have a particular aversion to every frequented street; but, at last, we got to the door of a dismal looking house in the outlets of the town, where he informed me he chose to reside for the benefit of the air.

15 We entered the lower door, which seemed ever to lie most hospitably open; and began to ascend an old and creaking stair case, when as he mounted to shew me the way, he demanded whether I delighted in prospects, to which answering in the affirmative, then says he I shall shew you one of the most charming out of my win-
 20 dows, for I live at the top of the house; we shall see the ships sailing, and the whole country for twenty miles round, tip top, quite high. My Lord Swamp would give ten thousand guineas for such a one; but as I sometimes pleasantly tell him, I always love to keep my prospects at home, that my friends may come to see me the oftener.

25 By this time we were arrived as high as the stairs would permit us to ascend, 'till we came to what he was facetiously pleased to call the first floor down the chimney; and knocking at the door, a voice from within demanded, wha's there? My conductor answered that it was

1 *voice, but* PL, 62; *voice!* But 65, 66

4 *walks*] 62-66; *dances* PL

7 *scholar; I'll*] 62-66; *scholar, and PL* I intend to] 65, 66; *om. PL, 62*

11 *ways. From*] 66; *ways; for from PL-65*

12 *but, at last*] 66; *at last, however PL-65*

15 *seemed ever*] 65, 66; *ever seemed PL, 62*

16 *began*] 66; *begun PL; I began 62, 65*

19 *charming*] 65, 66; *charming in the world PL, 62*

19-20 *windows, for . . . the house*] 66; *windows PL-65*

24 *come to*] 65, 66; *om. PL, 62*

27 *voice*] PL, 62; *voice, with a Scotch accent, 65, 66*

28 *wha's*] 65, 66; *who's PL, 62*

¹ The name is probably derived from the names of Queen Wilhelmina Caroline, wife of George II, and of Princess Amelia, his second daughter.

him. But this not satisfying the querist, the voice again repeated the demand; to which he answered louder than before; and now the door was opened by an old maid servant, with cautious reluctance.

When we were got in, he welcomed me to his house with great ceremony, and turning to the old woman, asked where her lady was. 5
Gud troth, replied she, in a peculiar dialect, she's washing your twa shirts at the next door, because they have taken an oath against lending out the tub any longer. *My two shirts*, cries he, in a tone that faltered with confusion, *what does the ideot mean?* I ken what I mean well enough, replied the other, she's washing your twa shirts at the 10
next door, because—*Fire and fury, no more of thy stupid explanations*, cried he.—*Go and inform her we have got company. Were that Scotch hag*, continued he, turning to me, *to be for ever in my family, she would never learn politeness, nor forget that absurd, poisonous accent of hers, or testify the smallest specimen of breeding or high life; and yet* 15
it is very surprizing too, as I had her from a parliament man, a friend of mine, from the highlands, one of the politest men in the world, but that's a secret.

We waited some time for Mrs. Tibbs's arrival, during which interval I had a full opportunity of surveying the chamber, and 20
all its furniture; which consisted of four chairs with old wrought bottoms, that he assured me were his wife's embroidery; a square table that had been once japanned, a cradle in one corner, a lumbering cabinet in the other; a broken shepherdess, and a mandarine without an head, were stuck over the chimney; and round the walls 25
several paltry, unframed pictures, which he observed, were all of his own drawing: what do you think, Sir, of that head in the corner, done in the manner of Grisoni? there's the true keeping in it; its my

2-3 the door] 62-66; *om. PL*

3 maid servant] 65, 66; woman *PL*, 62

4 to his house] 62-66; home *PL*

5 her lady was.] 65, 66; was her lady? *PL*, 62

6 Gud] *PL*; Good 62-66 a peculiar] 62; a provincial *PL*; the northern 65, 66

11 *Fire and fury*] 62-66; *Well PL*

11-12 *explanations*, cried he.—*Go*] 62-66; *explanations, ideot, cries he, go PL*

13 *hag*, continued he, turning to me,] 65, 66; *hag*, continues he, when she was gone, *PL*; *hag* 62

14 *learn politeness, nor*] 62-66; *be polite, or PL*

15 *breeding or*] 62-66; *om. PL*

19 Mrs. Tibbs's] 62-66; the lady's *PL*

21 furniture; which] 62-66; furniture. This *PL*

22 that] 62-66; which *PL*

26 of his] 65, 66; his *PL*, 62

own face, and though there happens to be no likeness, a countess offered me an hundred for its fellow; I refused her, for, hang it, that would be mechanical, you know.

The wife at last made her appearance, at once a slattern and a
 5 coquet; much emaciated, but still carrying the remains of beauty. She made twenty apologies for being seen in such an odious dishabille, but hoped to be excused, as she had staid out all night at Vauxhall Gardens with the countess, who was excessively fond of the *horns*. And indeed, my dear, added she, turning to her husband,
 10 his lordship drank your health in a bumper. Poor Jack, cries he, a dear good natured creature, I know he loves me, but I hope, my dear, you have given orders for dinner; you need make no great preparations neither, there are but three of us, something elegant, and little will do, a turbot, an ortolan, or a---or *what do you think*,
 15 *my dear*, interrupts the wife, *of a nice pretty bit of ox cheek, piping hot, and dressed with a little of my own sauce*.—The very thing, replies he, it will eat best with some smart bottled beer, but be sure to lets have the sauce his grace was so fond of. I hate your immense loads of meat; that is country all over; extreme disgusting to those who are
 20 in the least acquainted with high life.

By this time my curiosity began to abate, and my appetite to encrease; the company of fools may at first make us smile, but at last never fails of rendering us melancholy. I therefore pretended to re-collect a prior engagement, and after having shewn my respect to
 25 the house, according to the fashion of the English, by giving the old servant a piece of money at the door, I took my leave; Mr. Tibbs assuring me, that dinner, if I staid, would be ready at least in less than two hours.

8 Vauxhall Gardens] 65, 66; the gardens *PL*, 62

12 dinner;] 62-66; dinner, though *PL*

14 a turbot] 62-66; a bechamele, a turbot *PL*

17 some smart bottled beer] 62-66; porter *PL*

18 the sauce] 62-66; that sauce *PL*

19 that is . . . all over;] 62-66; it is *PL*

25 according to . . . the English,] *PL*, 62; *om.* 65, 66

26 leave;] 65, 66; leave. *PL*, 62

26-28 Mr. Tibbs . . . two hours.] 62-66; Adieu. *PL*

LETTER LVI.¹

[Some thoughts on the present situation of affairs, in the different countries of Europe.]

From Fum Hoam to Altangi, the discontented wanderer.

THE distant sounds of music that catch new sweetness as they 5
vibrate through the long-drawn valley, are not more pleasing to the ear than the tidings of a far distant friend.

I have just received two hundred of thy letters by the Russian caravan, descriptive of the manners of Europe. You have left it to geographers to determine, the site of their mountains, and extent 10 of their lakes, seeming only employed in discovering the genius, the government and disposition of the people.²

In those letters I perceive a journal of the operations of your mind upon whatever occurs, rather than a detail of your travels from one building to another; of your taking a draught of this ruin, or that obelisk; of paying so many Tomans³ for this commodity, or laying 15 up a proper store for the passage of some new wilderness.

From your accounts of Russia I learn, that this nation is again relaxing into pristine barbarity, that its great Emperor wanted a life of an hundred years more to bring about his vast design. A savage 20 people may be resembled to their own forests; a few years are sufficient to clear away the obstructions to agriculture; but it requires many ere the ground acquires a proper degree of fertility;⁴ the Russians attached to their ancient prejudices, again renew their

7 a] 62; my *PL*

10 extent] 62; the extent *PL*

12 people] 62; inhabitants *PL*

16 paying] 62; your paying *PL*

19 pristine] 62; its ancient *PL*

21 are] 62; is *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 8 July 1760.

² Cf. Goldsmith's complaint in his review of Van Egmont and Heyman's *Travels* that travellers in Asia describe 'the same cities, towns, ruins, and rivers' without considering 'the manners and the mechanic inventions, and the imperfect learning of the inhabitants' (above, I, p. 184).

³ Coins of Persia. D'Argens, from whom Goldsmith may have taken the word, says, 'Un toman vaut quinze écus de notre monnaie' (*Lettres chinoises*, i. 201 n.).

⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, lettre xxxv (ii. 43): 'Je regarde les Moscovites, comme ces terres arides & incultes abandonnées pendant plusieurs siècles, & qu'on ne peut défricher qu'avec de grandes peines; lors même qu'on en est venu à bout, il faut encore bien des années avant qu'on puisse y recueillir une moisson abondante.' With Goldsmith's further remarks on Russia cf. lettre lvii (ii. 282-4).

hatred to strangers, and indulge every former brutal excess. So true it is, that the revolutions of wisdom are slow and difficult; the revolutions of folly or ambition precipitate and easy. *We are not to be astonished, says Confucius**, that the wise walk more slowly in their road to virtue, than fools in their passage to vice; since passion drags us along, while wisdom only points out the way.

The German Empire, that remnant of the Majesty of ancient Rome, appears from your accounts on the eve of dissolution. The members of its vast body want every tie of government to unite them, and seem feebly held together only by their respect for an ancient institution. The very name of country and countrymen, which in other nations makes one of the strongest bonds of government, has been here for some time laid aside, each of its inhabitants seeming more proud of being called from the petty state which gives him birth, than by the more well known title of German. This government may be regarded in the light of a severe master, and a feeble opponent. The states which are now subject to the laws of the Empire, are only watching a proper occasion to fling off the yoke, and those which are become too powerful to be compelled to obedience, now begin to think of dictating in their turn. The struggles in this state are therefore not in order to preserve but to destroy the ancient constitution, if one side succeeds, the government must become despotic, if the other, several states will subsist without even nominal subordination, but in either case the Germanic constitution will be no more.¹

Sweden on the contrary, though now seemingly a strenuous assertor of its liberties, is probably only hastening on to despotism.

* Tho' this fine maxim be not found in the Latin edition of the morals of Confucius, yet we find it ascribed to him by Le Comte. *Etat present de la Chine*, Vol. I. p. 348.²

14 seeming] 62; being PL being called from the] 62; a denomination from some PL

15 by] 62; of PL This] 62; The PL; par. 62

17 The] 62; Those PL

19 which] 62; who PL

21 therefore] 62; therefore on both sides, PL

27 probably] 62; probably (like Denmark of late) PL

¹ This paragraph appears to be a generalization from *Lettres chinoises*, lettres xcvi and xcvi (iv. 62-84).

² 'On ne doit pas s'étonner que le Sage marche plus lentement dans la voye de la vertu, que les méchants en celle du vice. La passion entraîne, & la sagesse conduit.'

Their senators, while they pretend to vindicate the freedom of the people, are only establishing their own independance. The deluded people will however at last perceive the miseries of an aristocratical government; they will perceive, that the administration of a society of men is ever more painful than that of one only. They will fly from this most oppressive of all forms, where one single member is capable of controlling the whole, to take refuge under the throne which will ever be attentive to their complaints. No people long endure an aristocratical government, when they could apply elsewhere for redress. The lower orders of people may be enslaved for a time by a number of tyrants, but upon the first opportunity they will ever take a refuge in despotism or democracy.

As the Swedes are making concealed approaches to despotism, the French on the other hand are imperceptibly vindicating themselves into freedom. When I consider how their parliaments have shewed their countrymen what it was to oppose, who before regarded implicit obedience as their only glory; when I consider that those parliaments, (the members of which are all created by the court, the presidents of which can act only by immediate direction) presume even to mention privileges and freedom, who, till of late, received directions from the throne with implicit humility; when this is considered, I cannot help fancying that the genius of freedom has entered that kingdom in disguise. If they have but three weak monarchs more successively on the throne, the mask will be laid aside, and the country will certainly once more be free.

When I compare the figure which the Dutch make in Europe with that they assume in Asia, I am struck with surprize. In Asia I find them the great Lords of all the Indian seas; in Europe the timid inhabitants of a paltry state. No longer the sons of freedom, but of avarice; no longer assertors of their rights by courage, but by

1 freedom] 62; freedoms *PL*

6-7 where one . . . the whole,] 62; *om. PL*

8 ever] 62; here *PL*

8-9 long endure] 62; ever long endured *PL*

10 for redress. The] 62; in order to be rescued from its severity: the *PL*

12 a refuge . . . or democracy] 62; refuge in democracy or despotism *PL*

15 freedom] 62; liberty *PL*

15-17 how their . . . I consider] *PL*; *om. 62*

19-20 presume even to mention] 62; presumed even to talk of *PL*

21 directions] 62; all directions *PL* with implicit humility] 62; *om. PL*

23 that kingdom] 62; the kingdom *PL* they] 62; the French *PL*

24-25 the mask . . . and the] 62; she will throw off the mask, and their *PL*

25 once more] 62; *om. PL*

negociations; fawning on those who insult them, and crouching under the rod of every neighbouring power. Without a friend to save them in distress, and without virtue to save themselves; their government is poor, and their private wealth will serve but to invite
5 some neighbouring invader.

I long with impatience for your letters from England, Denmark, Holland, and Italy; yet why wish for relations which only describe new calamities, which shew that ambition and avarice are equally terrible in every region. Adieu.

10

LETTER LVII.¹

[The difficulty of rising in literary reputation, without intrigue or riches.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

15 I Have frequently admired the manner of criticising in China, where the learned are assembled in a body to judge of every new publication; to examine the merits of the work without knowing the circumstances of the author, and then to usher it into the world with the proper marks of respect or reprobation.

20 In England there are no such tribunals erected; but if a man thinks proper to be a judge of genius, few will be at the pains to contradict his pretensions. If any chuse to be critics, it is but saying they are critics; and from that time forward they become invested with full power and authority over every caitiff who aims at their instruction or entertainment.

25 As almost every member of society has by this means a vote in literary transactions; it is no way surprizing to find the rich leading the way here as in other common concerns of life, to see them either bribing the numerous herd of voters by their interest, or brow beating them by their authority.

30 A great man says, at his table, that such a book *is no bad thing*. Immediately the praise is carried off by five flatterers to be dispersed

5 some neighbouring] 62; the *PL*

20 few] 62; there are none found who *PL*

21 his pretensions] 62; him *PL*

22 become] 62; are *PL*

25 member of society] 62; subject *PL*

31 flatterers] 62; led Captains *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Wednesday, 9 July 1760.

at twelve different coffee-houses, from whence it circulates, still improving as it proceeds, through forty-five houses, where cheaper liquors are sold, from thence it is carried away by the honest tradesman to his own fire-side, where the applause is eagerly caught up by his wife and children, who have been long taught to regard his judgment as the standard of perfection. Thus when we have traced a wide extended literary reputation up to its original source, we shall find it derived from some great man, who has, perhaps, received all his education and English from a tutor of Berne, or a dancing master of Picardie.

The English are a people of good sense; and I am the more surprized to find them sway'd in their opinions, by men who often from their very education, are incompetent judges. Men who being always bred in affluence, see the world only on one side, are surely improper judges of human nature: they may indeed describe a ceremony, a pageant, or a ball; but how can they pretend to dive into the secrets of the human heart, who have been nursed up only in forms, and daily behold nothing but the same insipid adulation smiling upon every face. Few of them have been bred in that best of schools, the school of adversity; and by what I can learn, fewer still have been bred in any school at all.

From such a description one would think, that a droning Duke, or a Dowager Dutchess, was not possessed of more just pretensions to taste than persons of less quality; and yet, whatever the one or the other may write or praise, shall pass for perfection without farther examination. A nobleman has but to take pen, ink, and paper, and write away through three large volumes, and then sign his name to the title page, tho' the whole might have been before more disgusting than his own rent roll, yet signing his name and title gives value to the deed; title being alone equivalent to taste, imagination, and genius.¹

9 or] 62; and *PL*

23 was] 62; *om. PL*

24-25 the one or the other] 62; either *PL*

26-27 and write] 62; write *PL*

¹ Prior compares Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, ll. 418-23:

What woeful stuff this madrigal would be,
In some starved hackney sonneteer, or me!
But let a lord once own the happy lines,
How the wit brightens! how the style refines!
Before his sacred name flies ev'ry fault,
And each exalted stanza teems with thought!

As soon as a piece therefore is published, the first questions are, Who is the author? Does he keep a coach? Where lies his estate? What sort of a table does he keep? If he happens to be poor and unqualified for such a scrutiny, he and his works sink into irre-
 5 diable obscurity; and too late he finds, that having fed upon turtle is a more ready way to fame than having digested Tully.

The poor devil, against whom fashion has set its face, vainly alledges, that he has been bred in every part of Europe where know-
 10 ledge was to be sold; that he has grown pale in the study of nature and himself; his works may please upon the perusal, but his pretensions to fame are entirely disregarded; he is treated like a fidler, whose music, though liked, is not much praised, because he lives by it; while a gentleman performer, though the most wretched scraper alive, throws the audience into raptures. The fidler indeed may in
 15 such a case console himself by thinking, that while the other goes off with all the praise, he runs away with all the money: but here the parallel drops; for while the nobleman triumphs in unmerited applause, the author by profession steals off with—*Nothing*.

The poor, therefore, here, who draw their pens auxiliary to the
 20 laws of their country,¹ must think themselves very happy if they find, not fame but forgiveness; and yet they are hardly treated; for as every country grows more polite, the press becomes more useful; and writers become more necessary, as readers are supposed to increase. In a polished society, that man, though in rags, who has
 25 the power of enforcing virtue from the press, is of more real use than forty stupid brachmans, or bonzes, or guebres, though they preached never so often, never so loud, or never so long. That man, though in rags, who is capable of deceiving even indolence into wisdom, and who professes amusement while he aims at reformation, is more
 30 useful in refined society than twenty cardinals with all their scarlet, and tricked out in all the fopperies of scholastic finery.

¹ therefore is published] 62; is published here PL

³ poor and] 62; om. PL

¹⁴ The fidler indeed] 62; It is true, the fidler PL

¹⁸ by profession] 62; om. PL

³¹ all the] 62; the PL finery.] 62; finery. Adieu. PL

¹ See the *Enquiry*: 'An author may be considered as a merciful substitute to the legislature; he acts not by punishing crimes, but preventing them . . .' (above, I, pp. 314-15).

LETTER LVIII.¹

[A Visitation dinner described.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

AS the man in black takes every opportunity of introducing me 5
to such company as may serve to indulge my speculative temper, or gratify my curiosity; I was by his influence lately invited to a *visitation* dinner. To understand this term, you must know, that it was formerly the custom here for the principal priests to go about the country once a year, and examine upon the spot whether those 10
of subordinate orders did their duty, or were qualified for the task; whether their temples were kept in proper repair, or the laity pleased with their administration.

Though a visitation of this nature was very useful, yet it was found to be extremely troublesome; and for many reasons utterly inconvenient; for as the principal priests were obliged to attend at court, in order to solicit preferment, it was impossible they could at the same time attend in the country, which was quite out of the road to promotion: if we add to this the gout, which has been time immemorial a clerical disorder here, together with the bad wine, and 20
ill dressed provisions that must infallibly be served up by the way, it was not strange that the custom has been long discontinued. At present, therefore, every head of the church, instead of going about to visit his priests, is satisfied if his priests come in a body once a year to visit him; by this means the duty of half a year is dispatched in 25
a day. When assembled, he asks each in his turn how they have behaved, and are liked; upon which those who have neglected their duty, or are disagreeable to their congregation, no doubt accuse

10-11 those of subordinate orders] 62; the inferior priests PL

17 it was impossible] 62; how was it possible PL

19 promotion: if] 62; promotion? If PL

19-20 been time . . . disorder here] 62; ever stuck by the clergy, and which is a disorder averse to travelling PL

21 served up] 62; met PL

26 a day] 62; one day PL When assembled,] 62; Here PL his] 62; om. PL

27 are liked] 62; how they are liked PL

28 no doubt] 62; om. PL

themselves, and tell him all their faults; for which he reprimands them most severely.

The thoughts of being introduced into a company of philosophers and learned men, (for as such I conceived them) gave me no small
 5 pleasure; I expected our entertainment would resemble those sentimental banquets so finely described by Xenophon and Plato; I was hoping some Socrates would be brought in from the door, in order to harangue upon divine love; but as for eating and drinking I had prepared myself to be disappointed in that particular. I was apprized,
 10 that fasting and temperance were tenets strongly recommended to the professors of Christianity, and I had seen the frugality and mortification of the priests of the east; so that I expected an entertainment where we should have much reasoning, and little meat.

Upon being introduced, I confess I found no great signs of
 15 mortification in the faces or persons of the company. However, I imputed their florid looks to temperance, and their corpulence to a sedentary way of living. I saw several preparations indeed for dinner, but none for philosophy. The company seemed to gaze upon the table with silent expectation; but this I easily excused. Men of
 20 wisdom, thought I, are ever slow of speech; they deliver nothing unadvisedly. *Silence, says Confucius, is a friend that will never betray.* They are now probably inventing maxims, or hard sayings, for their mutual instruction, when some one shall think proper to begin.

My curiosity was now wrought up to the highest pitch; I impatiently
 25 looked round to see if any were going to interrupt the mighty pause; when, at last, one of the company declared, that there was a sow in his neighbourhood that farrowed fifteen pigs at a litter. This I thought a very preposterous beginning: but just as another was going to second the remark, dinner was served, which inter-
 30 rupted the conversation for that time.

The appearance of dinner, which consisted of a variety of dishes, seemed to diffuse new cheerfulness upon every face; so that I now expected the philosophical conversation to begin, as they improved

1 which] 62; which no doubt PL

6 and] 62; or PL

13 meat] 62; food PL

15-16 I imputed their florid looks] 62; their florid looks I imputed PL

16 corpulence] PL; corpulency 62

28 This I . . . but just] 62; Just PL

30 the conversation for that time] 62; a conversation that had begun so auspiciously PL

in good humour. The principal priest, however, opened his mouth, with only observing that the venison had not been kept enough, though he had given strict orders for having it killed ten days before. *I fear, continues he, it will be found to want the true heathy flavour, you will find nothing of the original wildness in it.* A priest who sate next 5 him having smelt it, and wiped his nose; ah, my good Lord, cries he, you are too modest, it is perfectly fine; every body knows that no body understands keeping venison with your Lordship. Ay, and partridges too, interrupted another; I never find them right any where else. His Lordship was going to reply, when a third took off 10 the attention of the company, by recommending the pig as inimitable. I fancy, my Lord, continues he, it has been smothered in its own blood? If it has been smothered in its blood, cried a facetious member, helping himself, we'll now smother it in egg sauce. This poignant piece of humour produced a long loud laugh, which the 15 facetious brother observing, and now that he was in luck, willing to second his blow, assured the company he would tell them a good story about that; as good a story, cries he, bursting into a violent fit of laughter himself, as ever you heard in your lives: there was a farmer of my parish, who used to sup upon wild ducks and flummery; so this farmer—*Doctor Marrowfat, cries his Lordship, interrupting him, give me leave to drink your health;*—so being fond of wild ducks and flummery—*Doctor, adds a gentleman who sate next him, let me advise you to a wing of this turkey;*—so this farmer being fond—*Hob nob Doctor which do you chuse, white or red?*—So being fond of 25 wild ducks and flummery,—*take care of your band, Sir, it may dip in the gravy.* The Doctor now looking round, found not a single eye disposed to listen; wherefore calling for a glass of wine, he gulped down the disappointment, and the tale in a bumper.

The conversation now began to be little more than a rhapsody of 30 exclamations; as each had pretty well satisfied his own appetite, he now found sufficient time to press others. *Excellent, the very thing; let me recommend the pig, do but taste the bacon; never eat a better thing in my life; exquisite, delicious.* This edifying discourse continued thro'

4 *continues*] *PL*; continued 62

16 observing] 62; therefore observing *PL*

17 company] 62; company that *PL*

19 himself] 62; *om. PL* ever you] 62; you ever *PL*

20 used] 62; often used *PL*

27 *gravy.* The] 62; *gravy;* the *PL*

28 listen] 62; hearken *PL*

three courses which lasted as many hours, till every one of the company was unable to swallow or utter any thing more.

It is very natural for men who are abridged in one excess, to break into some other. The clergy here, particularly those who are advanced in years, think if they are abstemious with regard to women and wine, they may indulge their other appetites without censure. Thus some are found to rise in the morning only to a consultation with their cook about dinner, and when that has been swallowed, make no other use of their faculties (if they have any) but to ruminate on the succeeding meal.

A debauch in wine is even more pardonable than this, since one glass insensibly leads on to another, and instead of sateing whets the appetite. The progressive steps to it are chearful, and seducing; the grave are animated, the melancholy relieved, and there is even classic authority to countenance the excess. But in eating after nature is once satisfied every additional morsel brings stupidity and distempers with it, and as one of their own poets expresses it,

The soul subsides, and wickedly inclines,
To seem but mortal, even in sound divines.¹

Let me suppose, after such a meal as this I have been describing, while all the company are sitting in lethargic silence round the table, grunting under a load of soup, pig, pork, and bacon, let me suppose I say, some hungry beggar with looks of want peeping thro' one of the windows, and thus addressing the assembly, *Prithee pluck those napkins from your chins; after nature is satisfied all that you eat extraordinary is my property, and I claim it as mine. It was given you in order to relieve me, and not to oppress yourselves. How can they comfort or instruct others, who can scarce feel their own existence, except from the unsavoury returns of an ill digested meal. But tho' neither you nor the cushions you sit upon will hear me, yet the world regards the excesses of its teachers with a prying eye, and notes their conduct with double severity.* I know no other answer any one of the company could make to such an expostulation, but this, "Friend you talk of our losing a character, and being disliked by the world; well, and supposing all

21 are sitting] 62; sit PL

22 a load of] 62; the load of the PL

25 your chins] 62; each chin PL

26 mine] 62; my due PL

this to be true, what then! who cares for the world? We'll preach for the world, and the world shall pay us for preaching, whether we like each other or not."

LETTER LIX.¹

[The Chinese philosopher's son escapes with the beautiful captive from slavery.] 5

From Hingpo to Lien Chi Altangi, by the way of Moscow.

YOU will probably be pleased to see my letter dated from Terki, a city which lies beyond the bounds of the Persian empire:² here, blessed with security, with all that is dear, I double my raptures, by communicating them to you; the mind sympathiz- 10
ing with the freedom of the body, my whole soul is dilated in gratitude, love, and praise.

Yet were my own happiness all that inspired my present joy, my raptures might justly merit the imputation of self-interest; but when I think that the beautiful Zelis is also free, forgive my triumph when 15
I boast of having rescued from captivity the most deserving object upon earth.

You remember the reluctance she testified at being obliged to marry the tyrant whom she hated. Her compliance at last was only feigned, in order to gain time to try some future means of escape. 20
During the interval between her promise and the intended performance of it, she came undiscovered one evening to the place where I generally retired after the fatigues of the day; her appearance was like that of an aerial genius, when it descends to minister comfort to undeserved distress, the mild lustre of her eye served to banish my 25
timidity, her accents were sweeter than the echo of some distant symphony. "Unhappy stranger, said she, in the Persian language, you here perceive one more wretched than thyself; all this solemnity of preparation, this elegance of dress, and the number of my attendants serve but to encrease my miseries; if you have courage to rescue 30
an unhappy woman from approaching ruin, and our detested tyrant,

3 not." 62; not." Adieu. PL

19 whom] PL; om. 62

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Monday, 21 July 1760.

² 'Terchi or Terki, . . . situate on the Coasts of the *Caspian Sea*', is 'the Capital of *Circassia*'. The princes of Circassia 'are all tributary to *Muscovy*' (Emanuel Bowen, *A Complete System of Geography* [1747], ii. 168-9).

you may depend upon my future gratitude." I bowed to the ground, and she left me, filled with rapture and astonishment. Night brought no rest, nor could the ensuing morning calm the anxieties of my mind. I projected a thousand methods for her delivery; but each,
 5 when strictly examined, appeared impracticable; in this uncertainty the evening again arrived, and I placed myself on my former station in hopes of a repeated visit. After some short expectation, the bright perfection again appeared; I bowed as before to the ground, when raising me up she observed, that the time was not to be spent in use-
 10 less ceremony; she observed, that the day following was appointed for the celebration of her nuptials, and that something was to be done that very night for our mutual deliverance. I offered with the utmost humility to pursue whatever scheme she should direct; upon which she proposed that instant to scale the garden wall, adding, that
 15 she had prevailed upon a female slave, who was now waiting at the appointed place, to assist her with a ladder.

Pursuant to this information I led her trembling to the place appointed; but instead of the slave we expected to see, Mostadad himself was there awaiting our arrival: the wretch in whom we con-
 20 fided, it seems, had betrayed our design to her master, and he now saw the most convincing proofs of her information. He was just going to draw his sabre, when a principle of avarice repressed his fury, and he resolved, after a severe chastisement, to dispose of me to another master, in the mean time ordering me to be confined in
 25 the strictest manner, and the next day to receive an hundred blows on the soles of my feet.

When the morning came I was led out in order to receive the punishment, which from the severity with which it is generally inflicted upon slaves, is worse even than death.¹

30 A trumpet was to be a signal for the solemnization of the nuptials of Zelis, and for the infliction of my punishment. Each ceremony to

16 ladder] 62; ladder of ropes *PL*

22 repressed] 62; repressing *PL*

23 and] 62; *om. PL*

26 my feet] 62; the [f]eet *PL*

28 with] 62; in *PL*

30 A] 62; The sounding a *PL*

¹ See Jonas Hanway, *An Historical Account of the British Trade over the Caspian Sea* (1753), i. 256: '... I saw [in Persia] several persons of distinction, who rode about with their feet wrapt in white cloths, having been beaten till their nails came off their toes, and the sinews made bare. ...'

me equally dreadful were just going to begin, when we were informed that a large party of circassian Tartars had invaded the town, and were laying all in ruin. Every person now thought only of saving himself, I instantly unloosed the cords with which I was bound, and seizing a scymeter from one of the slaves who had not courage to resist me, flew to the women's apartment where Zelis was confined, dressed out for the intended nuptials. I bade her follow me without delay; and going forward, cut my way through eunuchs, who made but a faint resistance. The whole city was now a scene of conflagration and terror; every person was willing to save himself unmindful of others. In this confusion seizing upon two of the fleetest coursers in the stables of Mostadad, we fled northward towards the kingdom of Circassia. As there were several others flying in the same manner, we passed without notice, and in three days arrived at Terki, a city that lies in a valley within the bosom of the frowning mountains of Caucasus.

Here free from every apprehension of danger we enjoy all those satisfactions which are consistent with virtue; though I find my heart at intervals give way to unusual passions, yet such is my admiration for my fair companion, that I lose even tenderness in distant respect. Though her person demands particular regard even among the beauties of Circassia;¹ yet is her mind far more lovely. How very different is a woman who thus has cultivated her understanding, and been refined into delicacy of sentiment from the daughters of the east, whose education is only formed to improve the person, and make them more tempting objects of prostitution!

Adieu.

¹³ Circassia. As] 62; Circassia; as *PL*

19-20 my admiration] 62; the admiration *PL*

¹ Circassian women were famed for their beauty. See, for example, Tom's rhapsody on Sophia in *Tom Jones*, bk. v, chap. x: "... Was I but possessed of thee, one only suit of rags thy whole estate, is there a man on earth whom I would envy! How contemptible would the brightest Circassian beauty, dressed in all the jewels of the Indies, appear to my eyes! . . ." At these words he started up, and beheld—not his Sophia—no, nor a Circassian maid richly and elegantly attired for the grand Signior's seraglio.'

LETTER LX.¹

[The history of the beautiful captive.]

From Hingpo to Lien Chi Altangi, by the way of Moscow.

5 **W**HEN sufficiently refreshed after the fatigues of our precipitate flight, my curiosity, which had been restrained by the appearance of immediate danger, now began to revive: I longed to know by what distressful accidents my fair fugitive became a captive, and could not avoid testifying a surprize how so much beauty could be involved in the calamities from whence she had
10 been so lately rescued.

Talk not of personal charms, cried she with emotion, since to them I owe every misfortune: look round on the numberless beauties of the country where we are; and see how nature has poured its charms upon every face, and yet by this profusion heaven would seem to
15 shew how little it regards such a blessing, since the gift is lavished upon a nation of prostitutes.

I perceive you desire to know my story, and your curiosity is not so great as my impatience to gratify it: I find a pleasure in telling past misfortunes to any, but when my deliverer is pleased with the
20 relation, my pleasure is prompted by duty.

I* was born in a country far to the west, where the men are braver, and the women more fair than those of Circassia; where the valour of the hero is guided by wisdom, and where delicacy of sentiment points the shafts of female beauty. I was the only daughter of an

25 * This story bears a striking similitude to the real history of Miss S——d, who accompanied Lady W——e, in her retreat near Florence, and which the editor had from her own mouth.²

13 and see] 62; see *PL*

26 Lady] 62; Mrs. *PL*

26-27 Florence, and . . . own mouth] 62; Florence *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Thursday, 24 July 1760.

² Miss S——d has not been identified. Lady W——e is taken to be Lady Walpole, i.e. Margaret Rolle, who in 1724 married Robert, first Baron Walpole, from 1742 second Earl of Orford. 'She lived in Italy apart from her husband many years, and Horace Walpole states . . . that Lord Orford separated from her about Mar. 1746.' Within two months of Lord Orford's death in 1751 she married the Hon. Sewallis Shirley, from whom she parted about 1754. A few months before the publication of this letter she became *suo jure* Baroness Clinton. See *The Complete Peerage*, x (1945), 85-86. Horace Walpole describes her conduct as even more libertine than that of the 'lady of the first distinction' in this letter.

officer in the army, the child of his age, and, as he used fondly to express it, the only chain that bound him to the world, or made his life pleasing. His station procured him an acquaintance with men of greater rank and fortune than himself, and his regard for me induced him to bring me into every family where he was acquainted: thus I 5 was early taught all the elegancies and fashionable foibles of such as the world calls polite, and though without fortune myself, was taught to despise those who lived as if they were poor.

My intercourse with the great, and my affectation of grandeur procured me many lovers, but want of fortune deterred them all 10 from any other views than those of passing the present moment agreeably, or of meditating my future ruin. In every company I found myself addressed in a warmer strain of passion, than other ladies who were superior in point of rank and beauty; and this I imputed to an excess of respect, which in reality proceeded from 15 very different motives.

Among the number of such as paid me their addresses, was a gentleman, a friend of my father's, rather in the decline of life, with nothing remarkable either in his person or address to recommend him. His age which was about forty, his fortune which was moderate, 20 and barely sufficient to support him, served to throw me off my guard, so that I considered him as the only sincere admirer I had.

Designing lovers in the decline of life are ever most dangerous. Skilled in all the weaknesses of the sex, they seize each favourable opportunity, and by having less passion than youthful admirers, 25 have less real respect, and therefore less timidity. This insidious wretch used a thousand arts to succeed in his base designs, all which I saw, but imputed to different views, because I thought it absurd to believe the real motives.

As he continued to frequent my father's, the friendship between 30 them became every day greater; and at last, from the intimacy with which he was received, I was taught to look upon him as a guardian and a friend. Though I never loved, yet I esteemed him; and this was enough to make me wish for an union, for which he seemed desirous, but to which he feigned several delays; while, in the mean 35

11 moment] 62; moments *PL*

18 father's] *PL*; father 62

23 Designing lovers] 62; A designing lover *PL* are] 62; is *PL*

25 youthful admirers.] 62; a youthful admirer, they *PL*

30-31 between them] 62; *om. PL*

time, from a false report of our being married, every other admirer forsook me.

I was at last however awakned from the delusion, by an account of his being just married to another young lady with a considerable
 5 fortune. This was no great mortification to me, as I had always regarded him merely from prudential motives; but it had a very different effect upon my father, who, rash, and passionate by nature, and besides stimulated by a mistaken notion of military honour, upbraided his friend in such terms, that a challenge was soon given
 10 and accepted.

It was about midnight when I was awakned by a message from my father, who desired to see me that moment. I rose with some surprise, and following the messenger, attended only by another servant, came to a field not far from the house, where I found him, the
 15 assertor of my honour, my only friend and supporter, the tutor and companion of my youth, lying on one side covered over with blood, and just expiring. No tears streamed down my cheeks, nor sigh escaped from my breast, at an object of such terror. I sate down, and supporting his aged head in my lap, gazed upon the ghastly visage
 20 with an agony more poignant even than despairing madness. The servants were gone for more assistance. In this gloomy stillness of the night no sounds were heard but his agonizing respirations; no object was presented but his wounds, which still continued to stream. With silent anguish I hung over his dear face, and with my hands
 25 strove to stop the blood as it flowed from his wounds; he seemed at first insensible, but at last turning his dying eyes upon me, "My dear, dear child, cried he, dear, though you have forgotten your own honour and stained mine, I will yet forgive you; by abandoning virtue you have undone me and yourself, yet take my forgiveness
 30 with the same compassion I wish heaven may pity me." He expired. All my succeeding happiness fled with him. Reflecting that I was the cause of his death whom only I loved upon earth, accused of betraying the honour of his family with his latest breath; conscious of my own innocence, yet without even a possibility of vindicating it; without
 35 fortune or friends to relieve or pity me, abandoned to infamy

4 young] 62; *om. PL*

17 down] 62; from *PL*

18 escaped] 62; *om. PL*

29 virtue] 62; your virtue *PL*

30 I wish] 62; as I wish *PL*

32 only I] 62; I only *PL*

and the wide censuring world, I called out upon the dead body that lay stretched before me, and in the agony of my heart asked why he could have left me thus? Why, my dear, my only Pappa, why could you ruin me thus, and yourself for ever! O pity, and return, since there is none but you to comfort me.¹

I soon found that I had real cause for sorrow; that I was to expect no compassion from my own sex, nor assistance from the other; and that reputation was much more useful in our commerce with mankind than really to deserve it. Wherever I came, I perceived myself received either with contempt or detestation; or whenever I was civilly treated, it was from the most base and ungenerous motives.

Thus driven from the society of the virtuous, I was at last, in order to dispell the anxieties of insupportable solitude, obliged to take up with the company of those whose characters were blasted like my own; but who perhaps deserved their infamy. Among this number was a lady of the first distinction, whose character the public thought proper to brand even with greater infamy than mine. A similitude of distress soon united us; I knew that general reproach had made her miserable; and I had learned to regard misery as an excuse for guilt. Though this lady had not virtue enough to avoid reproach, yet she had too much delicate sensibility not to feel it. She therefore proposed our leaving the country where we were born, and going to live in Italy, where our characters and misfortunes would be unknown. With this I eagerly complied, and we soon found ourselves in one of the most charming retreats in the most beautiful province of that enchanting country.

Had my companion chosen this as a retreat for injured virtue, an harbour where we might look with tranquility on the distant angry world, I should have been happy; but very different was her design; she had pitch'd upon this situation only to enjoy those pleasures in private which she had not sufficient effrontery to satisfy in a more open manner. A nearer acquaintance soon shewed me the vicious part of her character; her mind as well as her body seemed formed only for pleasure; she was sentimental only as it served to protract the immediate enjoyment. Formed for society alone, she spoke

17 brand even . . . than mine] 62; use in the freest manner *PL*

35 for society alone] 62; only for society *PL*

¹ There is a scene very similar to the one in this paragraph in the essay, probably by Goldsmith, entitled 'The History of Miss Stanton', published in the *British Magazine* for July 1760 (see Vol. III).

infinitely better than she wrote, and wrote infinitely better than she lived. A person devoted to pleasure often leads the most miserable life imaginable; such was her case; she considered the natural moments of languor as insupportable, passed all her hours between
 5 rapture and anxiety; ever in an extreme of agony or of bliss. She felt a pain as sincere for want of appetite, as the starving wretch who wants a meal. In those intervals she usually kept her bed, and rose only when in expectation of some new enjoyment.¹ The luxuriant air of the country, the romantic situation of her palace, and the genius
 10 of a people whose only happiness lies in sensual refinement, all contributed to banish the remembrance of her native country.

But tho' such a life gave her pleasure, it had a very different effect upon me; I grew every day more pensive, and my melancholy was regarded as an insult upon her good humour: I now perceived myself
 15 entirely unfit for all society; discarded from the good, and detesting the infamous, I seemed in a state of war with every rank of people: that virtue which should have been my protection in the world, was here my crime: in short, detesting life, I was determined to become a recluse, to leave a world where I found no pleasure that could
 20 allure me to stay. Thus determined, I embarked in order to go by sea to Rome, where I intended to take the veil; but even in so short a passage my hard fortune still attended me; our ship was taken by a Barbary corsair; the whole crew, and I among the number, being made slaves. It carries too much the air of romance to inform you
 25 of my distresses or obstinacy in this miserable state; it is enough to observe that I have been bought by several masters, each of whom perceiving my reluctance, rather than use violence sold me to another, till it was my happiness to be at last rescued by you.

Thus ended her relation, which I have abridged, but as soon as
 30 we are arrived at Moscow, for which we intend to set out shortly, you shall be informed of all more particularly. In the mean time, the greatest addition to my happiness will be to hear of your's.

Adieu.

6-7 starving wretch . . . a meal] 62; wretch who has not means to gratify the wants of nature *PL*

¹ The last four sentences are closely copied from the character of the Marquis d'Argens in 'Memoirs of M. de Voltaire' (below, III, p. 273).

LETTER LXI.¹

[Proper lessons to a youth entring the world; with fables suited to the occasion.]

From Lien Chi Altangi to Hingpo at Terki, by the way of Moscow.

THE news of your freedom lifts the load of former anxiety from
my mind; I can now think of my son without regret, applaud 5
his resignation under calamity, and his conduct in extricating himself
from it.

You are now free, just let loose from the bondage of an hard master:
this is the crisis of your fate; and as you now manage fortune, suc-
ceeding life will be marked with happiness or misery; a few years 10
perseverance in prudence, which at your age is but another name for
virtue, will ensure comfort, pleasure, tranquility, esteem; too eager
an enjoyment of every good that now offers, will reverse the medal,
and present you with poverty, anxiety, remorse, contempt.

As it has been observed that few are better qualified to give others 15
advice, than those who have taken the least of it themselves; so in
this respect I find myself perfectly authorized to offer mine, even
though I should wave my paternal authority upon this occasion.

The most usual way among young men who have no resolution
of their own, is first to ask one friends advice and follow it for some 20
time; then to ask advice of another, and turn to that; so of a third,
still unsteady, always changing. However, every change of this
nature is for the worse; people may tell you of your being unfit for
some peculiar occupations in life, but heed them not; whatever
employment you follow with perseverance and assiduity, will be 25
found fit for you, it will be your support in youth and comfort in

1-3 LETTER LXI . . . of Moscow.] ESSAY XII. 65, 66

4-14 THE news . . . remorse, contempt.] PL, 62; om. 65, 66

4 the load of former] 62; a load of PL

9 this] 62; this, this PL fortune] 62; your fortune PL

10 will] 62; is likely to PL

12 too] 62; but too PL

13 of every good that now] 62; now of every good that PL

15 few] 65, 66; none PL, 62

16 the] 62-66; om. PL

17-18 even though . . . this occasion] PL, 62; and must take leave to throw together
a few observations upon that part of a young man's conduct on his entering into life as
it is called 65, 66

20 ask one] 62-66; take one PL

22 every] 65, 66; be assured that every PL, 62

24 some peculiar . . . in life] 62-66; this or that employment PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Wednesday, 23 July 1760.

age. In learning the useful part of every profession, very moderate abilities will suffice; great abilities are generally obnoxious to the possessors. Life has been compar'd to a race, but the allusion still improves, by observing that the most swift are ever the most apt to stray from the course.

To know one profession only, is enough for one man to know; and this (whatever the professors may tell you to the contrary) is soon learned. Be contented therefore with one good employment; for if you understand two at a time, people will give you business in neither.

A conjurer and a taylor once happened to converse together. Alas, cries the taylor, what an unhappy poor creature am I; if people ever take it into their heads to live without cloaths I am undone; I have no other trade to have recourse to. Indeed, friend, I pity you sincerely, replies the conjurer; but, thank heaven, things are not quite so bad with me; for if one trick should fail, I have an hundred tricks more for them yet. However, if at any time you are reduced to beggary apply to me, and I will relieve you. A famine overspread the land; the taylor made a shift to live, because his customers could not be without cloaths; but the poor conjurer, with all his hundred tricks, could find none that had money to throw away: it was in vain that he promised to eat fire, or to vomit pins; no single creature would relieve him, till he was at last obliged to beg from the very taylor whose calling he had formerly despised.

There are no obstructions more fatal to fortune than pride and resentment. If you must resent injuries at all, at least suppress your indignation until you become rich, and then shew away. The resentment of a poor man is like the efforts of an harmless insect to sting;

2-3 suffice; great . . . the possessors.] 65, 66; suffice; nor do I jest when I observe, that if [suffice; even if 62] the mind be a little balanced with stupidity, it may in this case be useful. Great abilities have always been more unserviceable [been less serviceable 62] to the possessors than moderate ones. *PL*, 62

4-5 the most apt . . . the course] 65, 66; least manageable *PL*; the least manageable 62
6 to know] 62-66; *om. PL*

12 I; if] *PL*, 62; I! If 65, 66 ever] 65, 66; should ever *PL*, 62

13 into] *PL*, 65, 66; in 62

16 an] *PL*, 65, 66; a 62

22 to vomit] 62-66; vomit *PL*

24 despised] 62-66; villified *PL*

25 obstructions more fatal] 62-66; surer obstructions *PL*

26 at all] 62-66; *om. PL*

27 until] *PL*, 62; till 65, 66 rich, and . . . away. The] 65, 66; rich; the *PL*;
rich, and then shew away; the 62

28 an] *PL*; a 62-66

it may get him crushed, but cannot defend him. Who values that anger which is consumed only in empty menaces.

Once upon a time a goose fed its young by a pond side; and a goose in such circumstances is always extremely proud, and excessively punctilious. If any other animal without the least design 5 to offend, happened to pass that way, the goose was immediately at it. The pond she said was hers, and she would maintain her right in it, and support her honour, while she had a bill to hiss, or a wing to flutter. In this manner she drove away ducks, pigs, and chickens; nay, even the insidious cat was seen to scamper. A lounging mastiff, 10 however, happened to pass by, and thought it no harm if he should lap a little of the water, as he was thirsty. The guardian goose flew at him like a fury, pecked at him with her beak, and slapped him with her feathers. The dog grew angry, and had twenty times a mind to give her a sly snap, but suppressing his indignation because his 15 master was nigh, *A pox take thee*, cries he, *for a fool, sure those who have neither strength nor weapons to fight, at least should be civil*. So saying, he went forward to the pond, quenched his thirst, in spite of the goose, and followed his master.

Another obstruction to the fortune of youth is, that while they are 20 willing to take offence from none, they are also equally desirous of giving nobody offence. From hence they endeavour to please all, comply with every request, and attempt to suit themselves to every company; have no will of their own, but like wax catch every contiguous impression. By thus attempting to give universal satisfaction, 25 they at last find themselves miserably disappointed; to bring the generality of admirers on our side, it is sufficient to attempt pleasing a very few.

A painter of eminence was once resolved to finish a piece which should please the whole world. When, therefore, he had drawn a 30

4-5 excessively] *PL*, 65; excessive 62, 66

7 it] 65, 66; him *PL*, 62 her right] 65, 66; a right *PL*, 62

11 thought] 62-66; thinking *PL*

11-12 should lap] 62-66; lapped *PL*

12 thirsty] 62-66; thirsty, made up to the pond *PL*

14 feathers. The] 62-66; feathers; the *PL* and had] 65, 66; had *PL*, 62
mind] 65, 66; good mind *PL*, 62

16 cries] *PL*-65; cried 66

17 civil] 65, 66; civil; that fluttering and hissing of thine may one day get thine head
snapt off, but it can neither injure thy enemies, or ever protect thee *PL*, 62

18-19 in spite of the goose,] 62-66; om. *PL*

22 nobody] 65, 66; none *PL*, 62

23 and] 65, 66; om. *PL*, 62

picture, in which his utmost skill was exhausted, it was exposed in the public market-place, with directions at the bottom for every spectator to mark with a brush, that lay by, every limb and feature which seemed erroneous. The spectators came, and in general
 5 applauded; but each, willing to shew his talent at criticism, stigmatized whatever he thought proper. At evening, when the painter came, he was mortified to find the picture one universal blot; not a single stroke that had not the marks of disapprobation. Not satisfied with this trial, the next day he was resolved to try them in a different
 10 manner, and exposing his picture as before, desired that every spectator would mark those beauties he approved or admired. The people complied, and the artist returning, found his picture covered with the marks of beauty; every stroke that had been yesterday condemned, now received the character of approbation. *Well*, cries
 15 the painter, *I now find that the best way to please all the world is to attempt pleasing one half of it.*¹ Adieu.

LETTER LXII.²

[An authentic history of Catharina Alexowna, wife of Peter the Great.]

From Lien Chi Altangi to Hingpo, by the way of Moscow.

20 **A** Character, such as you have represented that of your fair companion, which continues virtuous, tho' loaded with infamy, is truly great. Many regard virtue because it is attended with

3 that] 65, 66; which PL, 62

5-6 stigmatized] 65, 66; marked PL, 62

7 picture] 65, 66; whole picture PL, 62

8 had not the] 65, 66; was not stigmatized with PL, 62 disapprobation.

Not] 65, 66; disapprobation: not PL, 62

10 exposing his picture as before,] 62-66; om. PL

11 would] 62-66; should PL

12 found] 62-66; now found PL covered] 65, 66; replete PL, 62

14 now] 62-66; had now PL approbation] 62-66; admiration PL

15-16 *all the . . . of it*] 65, 66; *one half of the world, is not to mind what the other half says; since what are faults in the eyes of those, by these are [eyes of these, shall be by those 62] regarded as beauties* PL, 62

16 Adieu.] PL, 62; om. 65, 66

20-21 that of your fair companion] 62; om. PL

21 virtuous] 62; to be virtuous PL

¹ Goldsmith here repeats with many verbal similarities an anecdote that he had used in his essay 'The Futility of Criticism' in the *Weekly Magazine* for 12 January 1760 (below, III, pp. 51-52).

² In the *Public Ledger* for Monday, 28 July 1760.

applause; your favourite only for the internal pleasure it confers. I have often wish'd that ladies like her were proposed as models for female imitation, and not such as have acquired fame by qualities repugnant to the natural softness of the sex.

Women famed for their valour, their skill in politics, or their learning, leave the duties of their own sex, in order to invade the privileges of ours.¹ I can no more pardon a fair one for endeavouring to weild the club of Hercules, than I could him for attempting to twirl her distaff.

The modest virgin, the prudent wife, or the careful matron, are much more serviceable in life than petticoated philosophers, blustering heroines, or virago Queens. She who makes her husband and her children happy, who reclaims the one from vice, and trains up the others to virtue, is a much greater character than ladies described in romance, whose whole occupation is to murder mankind with shafts from their quiver or their eyes.

Women, it has been observed, are not naturally formed for great cares themselves, but to soften ours. Their tenderness is the proper reward for the dangers we undergo for their preservation; and the ease and chearfulness of their conversation our desirable retreat from the fatigues of intense application. They are confined within the narrow limits of domestic assiduity; and when they stray beyond them, they move beyond their sphere, and consequently without grace.²

Fame therefore has been very unjustly dispensed, among the

6 leave] 62; may be said to leave *PL*

10 matron] 62; mother *PL*

11 in life] 62; *om. PL*

13 and trains] 62; or trains *PL*

14 others] *PL*; other 62

14-15 ladies described in] 62; the finest Lady that ever existed in poetry, or *PL*

15 is to] 62; it has been to *PL*

16 shafts] 62; the shafts *PL* their quiver or their] 62; her quiver or her *PL*

21 intense application] 62; study, war, or business *PL*

23 beyond their sphere] 62; excentrically *PL*

25 therefore] 62; *om. PL* dispensed,] 62; dispensed, therefore *PL*

¹ Cf. the opening sentence of 'The History of Hypasia' in the *Bee*, No. III: 'Man, when secluded from society, is not a more solitary being than the woman who leaves the duties of her own sex to invade the privileges of ours.'

² This paragraph is borrowed with only slight verbal changes from *Common Sense*: or, the *Englishman's Journal* for 10 September 1737 (1738), p. 225. The borrowing was pointed out by W. H. O. in the *Athenaeum*, 21 July 1883, p. 81.

female sex. Those who least deserved to be remembered, meet our admiration and applause; while many who have been an honour to humanity are passed over in silence. Perhaps no age has produced a stronger instance of misplaced fame than the present: the Semiramis
 5 and the Thalestris of antiquity are talked of,¹ while a modern character infinitely greater than either, is unnoticed and unknown.

*Catharina Alexowna, born near Derpat, a little city in Livonia, was heir to no other inheritance than the virtues and frugality of her

* This account seems taken from the manuscript memoirs of H. Spilman, Esq;²

1 sex. Those] 62; sex, those PL

3 age] 62; period PL

4 misplaced fame] 62; the blindness of fame in this respect PL

5-6 a modern character] 62; modern characters PL

6 is unnoticed and unknown] 62; are entirely unnoticed PL

7 *Catharina Alexowna,] 62; Catharina Alexowna was PL

8 was heir] 62; in the year of the Christian æra 1688. Born PL

9 *This account . . . Spilman, Esq;] 62; om. PL

¹ Cf. p. 228 of the number of *Common Sense* cited in the preceding note: 'I confess, one has read of Ladies, such as *Semiramis*, *Thalestris*, and others, who have made very considerable Figures in the most heroick and manly Parts of Life; but considering the great Antiquity of those Histories, . . . one is at Liberty to question either the Facts, or the Sex.'

² H. Spilman has not been identified. No one of that name can be found by the index of names to the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1731 through 1786. 'Henry Spelman of Peckham, Esq;' died in 1755 (*Gentleman's Magazine*, xxv. 284), and 'H. Spelman' received minor ecclesiastical preferment in 1780 (*ibid.* l. 52); but there is no reason to think that either is the person referred to.

The ultimate source of the information about Catherine given in this letter has not been found. It can only be said, for the aid of anyone wishing to investigate the problem further, that none of the following works was the source: Captain John Perry, *The State of Russia under the Present Czar* (1716); *The Northern Heroine: being Authentick Memoirs of the Late Czarina, Empress of Russia* (1727); [Jean Rousset de Missy], *Mémoires du règne de Catherine Impératrice & Souveraine de toute la Russie* (La Haye, 1728); [Jean Rousset de Missy], *Mémoires du règne de Pierre le Grand . . . par le B. Iwan Nestesuranoi* (2nd ed.; Amsterdam, 1728-30); A. de la Motraye, *Voyage en anglois et en françois . . . en diverses provinces . . . de la Prusse, . . . de la Russie, de la Pologne, &c.* (La Haye, 1732); J. P. Bernard, Thomas Birch, and John Lockman, *A General Dictionary, Historical and Critical* (1734-41), viii. 337-8, art. 'Peter I'; John Mottley, *The History of the Life of Peter I* (1739); [E. de Mauvillon], *Histoire de Pierre I. surnommé le Grand* (Amsterdam and Leipzig, 1742); John Mottley, *The History of the Life and Reign of the Empress Catharine* (1744; reissued in 1757 as *The History of the Russian Empire*); [Léonor-Jean-Christine Soulas d'Allainval], *Anecdotes du règne de Pierre premier, dit le Grand, Czar de Moscovie* [no place], 1745); [John Banks], *A New History of the Life and Reign of the Czar Peter the Great* (3rd ed., 1755); Alexander Gordon, *The History of Peter the Great, Emperor of Russia* (Aberdeen, 1755); Voltaire, *Histoire de l'empire de Russie sous Pierre le Grand*, vol. i (1759). Goldsmith's account differs from the others on important points and is in general more romantic.

parents. Her father being dead, she lived with her aged mother, in their cottage covered with straw, and both, though very poor, were very contented. Here retired from the gaze of the world by the labour of her hands she supported her parent, who was now incapable of supporting herself. While Catharina spun, the old woman 5 would sit by, and read some book of devotion; thus when the fatigues of the day were over, both would sit down contentedly by their fire-side, and enjoy the frugal meal with vacant festivity.

Though her face and person were models of perfection, yet her whole attention seem'd bestowed upon her mind; her mother taught 10 her to read, and an old Lutheran minister instructed her in the maxims and duties of religion. Nature had furnished her not only with a ready but a solid turn of thought, not only with a strong but a right understanding. Such truly female accomplishments procured her several solicitations of marriage from the peasants of the country, 15 but their offers were refused, for she loved her mother too tenderly to think of a separation.

Catharina was fifteen when her mother died, she now therefore left her cottage, and went to live with the Lutheran minister; by whom she had been instructed from her childhood. In this house 20 she resided, in quality of governess to his children, at once reconciling in her character unerring prudence with surprising vivacity.

The old man, who regarded her as one of his own children, had her instructed in dancing and music by the masters who attended the rest of his family; thus she continued to improve till he died, by 25 which accident she was once more reduced to pristine poverty. The country of Livonia was at this time wasted by war, and lay in a most

1 parents. Her father being dead,] 62; parents; she was very poor and very contented. After her father's death *PL*

2-3 both, though . . . contented. Here] 62; here *PL*

4 she] 62; *om. PL*

6 thus] 62; and *PL*

7 would sit] 62; sate *PL*

8 enjoy] 62; enjoy'd *PL*

10-11 her mother taught her] 62; being taught by her mother *PL*

11 an] 62; by an *PL* instructed her in] 62; *om. PL*

12-13 her not . . . of thought,] 62; her, (which is but seldom the case) *PL*

16 for] 62; not that she despised them, but because *PL*

19 her cottage] 62; the cottage in which she was bred *PL*

21 resided, in quality of] 62; lived as *PL*

23 man, who] 62; man *PL* had] 62; and had *PL*

25 family; thus] 62; family. Thus *PL* he] 62; her benefactor *PL*

26 accident] 62; *om. PL* pristine] 62; extreme *PL*

miserable state of desolation. Those calamities are ever most heavy upon the poor; wherefore Catharina, though possessed of so many accomplishments, experienced all the miseries of hopeless indigence. Provisions becoming every day more scarce, and her private stock
 5 being entirely exhausted, she resolved at last to travel to Marienburgh, a city of greater plenty.

With her scanty wardrobe, packed up in a wallet, she set out upon her journey on foot: she was to walk through a region, miserable by nature, but rendered still more hideous by the Swedes and
 10 Russians, who, as each happened to become masters, plundered it at discretion: but hunger had taught her to despise the dangers and fatigues of the way.

One evening, upon her journey, as she had entered a cottage by the way-side, to take up her lodging for the night, she was insulted
 15 by two Swedish soldiers, who insisted upon qualifying her, as they termed it, *to follow the camp*. They might, probably, have carried their insults into violence, had not a subaltern officer, accidentally passing by, come in to her assistance: upon his appearing the soldiers immediately desisted; but her thankfulness was hardly greater than
 20 her surprise, when she instantly recollected in her deliverer, the son of the Lutheran minister, her former instructor, benefactor and friend.

This was an happy interview for Catharina; the little stock of money she had brought from home was by this time quite exhausted;
 25 her cloaths were gone, piece by piece, in order to satisfy those who had entertained her in their houses; her generous countryman, therefore, parted with what he could spare, to buy her cloaths, furnished her with an horse, and gave her letters of recommendation to Mr. Gluck, a faithful friend of his father's, and Superintendant
 30 of Marienburgh.

2 wherefore] 62; so that *PL*

3-4 indigence. Provisions] 62; indigence, yet without murmuring. Provisions therefore *PL*

4-5 scarce, and . . . entirely exhausted] 62; scarce at home *PL*

7 upon] *PL*; on 62

8 she was] 62; hunger had taught her to despise the dangers or the fatigues of the way. She was *PL*

10-12 at discretion . . . the way] 62; without mercy *PL*

14 to] 62; in order to *PL*

18 assistance] 62; rescue *PL* appearing] 62; appearance *PL*

26 houses] 62; houses by the way *PL*

28 horse] 62; horse to Marienburgh *PL*

30 Marienburgh] 62; the town *PL*

Our beautiful stranger had only to appear, to be well receiv'd, she was immediately admitted into the superintendant's family as governess to his two daughters; and though yet but seventeen, shewed herself capable of instructing her sex not only in virtue but politeness. Such was her good sense and beauty, that her master himself in a short time offered her his hand, which to his great surprize she thought proper to refuse. Actuated by a principle of gratitude, she was resolved to marry her deliverer only, even tho' he had lost an arm, and was otherwise disfigured by wounds in the service.

In order therefore to prevent further solicitations from others, as soon as the officer came to town upon duty, she offered him her person, which he accepted with transport, and their nuptials were solemnized as usual. But all the lines of her fortune were to be striking: the very day on which they were married, the Russians laid siege to Marienburgh; the unhappy soldier had now no time to enjoy the well earned pleasures of matrimony; he was called off before consummation to an attack, from which he was never after seen to return.

In the mean time the siege went on with fury, aggravated on one side by obstinacy, on the other by revenge. This war between the two northern powers at that time was truly barbarous; the innocent peasant, and the harmless virgin, often shared the fate of the soldier in arms. Marienburgh was taken by assault; and such was the fury of the assailants, that not only the garrison, but almost all the inhabitants, men, women, and children were put to the sword; at length when the carnage was pretty well over, Catharina was found hid in an oven.

1 to be] 62; in order to be *PL*

8 only] 62; *om. PL*

12 the officer] 62; her benefactor *PL*

14-15 But all . . . striking: the] 62; Think not that fancy guides the pen; I only proceed in the relation of facts, which there are still living witnesses to prove. The *PL*

15 the Russians] 62; Peter the Great's army *PL*

16 Marienburgh; the] 62; Marienburgh. The *PL*

18-19 an attack . . . to return] 62; assist in a sally, from whence he did not return, and was never after heard of *PL*

20-21 one side . . . other by] 62; both sides by obstinacy and *PL*

21-22 This war . . . that time] 62; The war carried on at that time between the two northern powers *PL*

22 the innocent] 62; in this the innocent *PL*

24 arms.] 62; arms; *PL* taken] 62; taken that very night *PL*

26 sword:] 62; sword. It was with great difficulty the officers could put a stop to such barbarities; but *PL*

She had been thitherto poor, but still was free; she was now to conform to her hard fate, and learn what it was to be a slave: in this situation, however, she behaved with piety and humility; and though misfortunes had abated her vivacity, yet she was cheerful. The fame
 5 of her merit and resignation reach'd even Prince Menzikoff the Russian General; he desired to see her, was struck with her beauty, bought her from the soldier, her master, and placed her under the direction of his own sister. Here she was treated with all the respect which her merit deserved, while her beauty every day improved
 10 with her good fortune.

She had not been long in this situation when Peter the Great paying the Prince a visit, Catharina happened to come in with some dry fruits, which she served round with peculiar modesty. The mighty Monarch saw, and was struck with her beauty. He returned
 15 the next day, called for the beautiful slave, asked her several questions, and found her understanding even more perfect than her person. He had been forced when young to marry from motives of interest, he was now resolved to marry pursuant to his own inclinations. He immediately enquired the history of the fair Livonian,
 20 who was not yet eighteen. He traced her thro' the vale of obscurity, through all the vicissitudes of her fortune, and found her truly great in them all. The meanness of her birth was no obstruction to his design, their nuptials were solemnized in private, the Prince assuring his courtiers, that virtue alone was the properest ladder to
 25 a throne.

We now see Catharina, from the low mud-walled cottage, Empress of the greatest kingdom upon earth. The poor solitary wanderer is now surrounded by thousands who find happiness in her smile. She, who formerly wanted a meal, is now capable of diffusing plenty upon
 30 whole nations. To her fortune she owed a part of this preheminance, but to her virtues more. She ever after retained those great qualities

4 yet] 62; yet still *PL*

5 resignation] 62; resignation to her humble station, *PL*

7 soldier,] 62; soldier who was *PL*

8 Here] 62; In this family *PL*, *beginning a par.*

9 improved] 62; seemed to improve *PL*

11 She] 62; *no par. PL*

14 saw] 62; immediately saw *PL*

15 day,] 62; day and *PL*

16 even more perfect than] 62; more perfect than even *PL*

17 He] *PL*; *par. 62*

21 through] 62; *om. PL*

31 She] *PL*; *par. 62*

which first placed her on a throne; and while the extraordinary prince her husband laboured for the reformation of his male subjects, she studied, in her turn, the improvement of her own sex. She altered their dresses, introduced mixed assemblies, instituted an order of female knighthood;¹ and at length, when she had greatly filled all the stations of Empress, friend, wife, and mother, bravely died, without regret, regretted by all. Adieu.

LETTER LXIII.²

[The rise or the decline of literature, not dependant on man, but resulting from the vicissitudes of nature.]

10

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin in China.

IN every letter I expect accounts of some new revolutions in China, some strange occurrence in the state, or disaster among my private acquaintance. I open every paquet with tremulous expectation, and am agreeably disappointed when I find my friends and my country continuing in felicity. I wander, but they are at rest; they suffer few changes but what pass in my own restless imagination; it is only the rapidity of my own motion gives an imaginary swiftness to objects which are in some measure immoveable.³

20

3 her own sex] 62; the women PL

4 altered] 62; improved PL

6 wife, and mother] 62; mother, wife PL

17 continuing in] 62; fixed in unchanging PL

19 it is only] 62; om. PL an] 62; om. PL

20 objects which . . . measure immoveable] 62; those objects which seldom move PL

¹ See [Jean Rousset de Missy], *Mémoires du règne de Catherine Impératrice & Souveraine de toute la Russie* (La Haye, 1728), pp. 59–60, 65–66: ‘. . . c’est à elle que la Cour de Russie doit ces usages conformes à ceux des autres nations qui y ont été établis. . . . Le Czar avoit changé l’habillement des femmes. . . . Par un ordre du Czar les femmes ne furent plus enfermées dans des apartemens separez, elles frequentèrent les compagnies, & se trouvèrent aux noces & autres fêtes extraordinaires. La Czaritze l’engagea même à établir des Assemblées comme on en tient dans tous les pays civilisez. . . .’

‘La Czaritze institua . . . un Ordre [de Chevalerie] pour les femmes, mais qu’elle a conféré à un tres-petit nombre, on le nomme l’Ordre de St. Catherine. . . .’ This same information appears in some of the other works listed in the note above, but Goldsmith seems to have turned to these pages of this book in writing his paper ‘Of the Assemblies of Russia’ for the *Lady’s Magazine* of September 1760.

² In the *Public Ledger* for Wednesday, 13 August 1760.

³ Cf. Goldsmith’s letter of 27 December 1757 to Daniel Hodson: ‘. . . as my thoughts

Yet believe me, my friend, that even China itself is imperceptibly degenerating from her antient greatness; her laws are now more venal, and her merchants are more deceitful than formerly;¹ the very arts and sciences have run to decay. Observe the carvings on our
 5 antient bridges, figures that add grace even to nature.² There is not an artist now in all the empire that can imitate their beauty. Our manufactures in porcelaine too are inferior to what we once were famous for,³ and even Europe now begins to excell us.⁴ There was a time when China was the receptacle of strangers, when all were
 10 welcome who either came to improve the state, or admire its greatness; now the empire is shut up from every foreign improvement; and the very inhabitants discourage each other from prosecuting their own internal advantages.

Whence this degeneracy in a state so little subject to external
 15 revolutions, how happens it that China, which is now more powerful than ever, which is less subject to foreign invasions, and even assisted in some discoveries by her connexions with Europe; whence comes it, I say, that the empire is thus declining so fast into barbarity!

This decay is surely from nature, and not the result of voluntary
 20 degeneracy. In a period of two or three thousand years she seems,

1 imperceptibly] 62; *om. PL*

3 are more] 62; more *PL*

5 add grace even] 62; may almost be said to add grace *PL*

5-6 There is not an artist] 62; Who is there *PL*

6 imitate] 62; even imitate *PL* beauty. Our] 62; beauty? our *PL*

8 for] 62; for making *PL*

9 of strangers, when] 62; for strangers, and *PL*

11 the empire] 62; it *PL*

18 so] 62; *om. PL*

19-20 This decay . . . voluntary degeneracy.] 62; *om. PL*

20 two or three] 62; three or four *PL* she] 62; nature *PL*

sometimes found refuge from severer studies among my friends in Ireland I fancied to myself strange revolutions at home, but I find it was the rapidity of my own motion that gave an imaginary one to Objects really at rest. No alterations there . . .' (*Collected Letters*, p. 30).

¹ Du Halde describes the deceitfulness of Chinese merchants and suggests that they have 'learn'd Deceit from the Europeans' (i. 279).

² For the beauty of carving on Chinese bridges see Du Halde, i. 288.

³ In describing the manufacture of 'Porcelain or China-Ware' Du Halde incidentally offers an explanation of why 'the China-Ware made at present is not so beautiful as it was formerly' (i. 341).

⁴ Cf. 'An Essay on Projectors' in the *Public Ledger* for 8 February 1760: ' . . . the Chelsea, Bow, and Worcester porcelain, though of late invention, nearly equals that of China, and with respect to the beauty of painting greatly exceeds it.'

at proper intervals, to produce great minds, with an effort resembling that which introduces the vicissitudes of seasons. They rise up at once, continue for an age, enlighten the world, fall like ripened corn, and mankind again gradually relapse into pristine barbarity. We little ones look around, are amazed at the decline, seek after the causes of this visible decay, attribute to want of encouragement what really proceeds from want of power, are astonished to find every art and every science in the decline, not considering that autumn is over, and fatigued nature again begins to repose for some succeeding effort.¹

Some periods have been remarkable for the production of men of extraordinary stature; others for producing some particular animals in great abundance; some for excessive plenty; and others again for seemingly causeless famine. Nature, which shews herself so very different in her visible productions, must surely differ also from herself in the production of minds; and while she astonishes one age with the strength and stature of a Milo or a Maximin, may bless another with the wisdom of a Plato, or the goodness of an Antonine.

Let us not then attribute to accident the falling off of every nation; but to the natural revolution of things. Often in the darkest ages there has appeared some one man of surprizing abilities, who, with all his understanding, failed to bring his barbarous age into refine-

1-2 produce great . . . seasons. They] 62; have her harvests of great men; they *PL*

4 relapse] 62; relapses *PL* barbarity. We] 62; barbarity; we *PL*

5-6 the causes of this] 62; causes of the *PL*

6 visible] *PL*; invisible 62

7 are] 62; and are *PL*

8 decline] 62; wane *PL*

9-10 for some succeeding effort] 62; from her labours *PL*

13 some for] 62; some periods are remarkable for *PL*

14 famine. Nature] 62; indigence; nature *PL*

17 stature] 62; the stature *PL*

20-5 (p. 264) things. Often . . . glory. Thus] 62; things; *PL*

¹ Goldsmith gives a contrary explanation of the decline of learning at the beginning of chap. ii of the *Enquiry*: 'If we consider the revolutions which have happened in the common wealth of letters, survey the rapid progress of learning in one period of antiquity, or its amazing decline in another, we shall be almost induc'd to accuse nature of partiality, as if she had exhausted all her efforts in adorning one age, while she left the succeeding entirely neglected. It is not to nature, however, but to ourselves alone that this partiality must be ascrib'd; the seeds of excellence are sown in every age, and it is wholly owing to a wrong direction in the passions or pursuits of mankind that they have not received the proper cultivation' (above, I, pp. 259-60). On the general background of Goldsmith's speculation see John D. Scheffer, 'The Idea of Decline in Literature and the Fine Arts in Eighteenth-century England', *Modern Philology*, xxxiv (1936), 155-78.

ment: all mankind seemed to sleep, till nature gave the general call, and then the whole world seemed at once roused at the voice; science triumphed in every country, and the brightness of a single genius seemed lost in a galaxy of contiguous glory.¹

- 5 Thus the enlightened periods in every age have been universal. At the time when China first began to emerge from barbarity, the western world was equally rising into refinement; when we had our *Yau*² they had their *Sesostris*.³ In succeeding ages, Confucius and Pythagoras seem born nearly together,⁴ and a train of philosophers
10 then sprung up as well in Greece as in China. The period of renewed barbarity begun to have an universal spread much about the same time, and continued for several centuries, till in the year of the christian æra 1400, the Emperor Yonglo arose, to revive the learning of the east;⁵ while about the same time the Medicean family laboured
15 in Italy to raise infant genius from the cradle: thus we see politeness spreading over every part of the world in one age, and barbarity succeeding in another; at one period a blaze of light diffusing itself over the whole world, and at another all mankind wrapped up in the profoundest ignorance.

- 20 Such has been the situation of things in times past, and such

5-6 age have been universal. At] 62; part of the world have been the same: at *PL*

7 when we had] 62; for *PL*

8 In succeeding ages,] 62; *om. PL*

9 seem] 62; seemed *PL*

10 then sprung up] 62; succeeded *PL* China. The] 62; China; the *PL*

11 to have an universal spread] 62; in each country *PL*

13 to] 62; in order to *PL*

15 raise infant . . . the cradle] 62; retrieve the remains of western erudition *PL*

19 the profoundest] 62; profound *PL*

¹ Goldsmith had used this same figure in the *Enquiry*: 'Like stars lost in each others brightness, tho' no single writer attracts our attention alone, yet their conjunction diffuses such brightness upon the age . . .' (above, I, p. 291); and he had repeated it in almost the same words in the *Bee* (above, I, p. 498).

² Concerning 'YAU, the Eighth Emperor' of China, Du Halde says: 'He is considered as the first Legislator of the Nation, and the Model of the Sovereigns' (i. 143).

³ See *An Universal History, from the Earliest Account of Time* (1747), ii. 46-48: '*Sesostris, Sesostris, . . .* and several other appellations, are, by some, held to belong to one man, whose reign is esteemed the most extraordinary part of the *Egyptian* history. He is represented as potent at land and on sea, wise, just, generous, valorous, magnificent. . . .'

⁴ See Du Halde, i. 415: 'Confucius was born . . . 551 Years before Christ. . . . He was contemporary with the famous *Pythagoras*. . . .'

⁵ Concerning 'CHING-TSU, or YONG-LO' Du Halde says: 'The thirtieth Year of the Cycle [i.e. in A.D. 1414] he appointed forty two Doctors of the Court, called *Han-lin*, to explain more fully the ancient Classical Books . . .' (i. 219).

probably it will ever be. China, I have observed, has evidently begun to degenerate from its former politeness; and were the learning of the Europeans at present candidly considered, the decline would perhaps appear to have already taken place. We should find among the natives of the west the study of morality displaced for mathematical disquisition, or metaphysical subtleties; we should find learning begin to separate from the useful duties and concerns of life; while none ventured to aspire after that character but they who know much more than is truly amusing or useful.¹ We should find every great attempt suppressed by prudence, and the rapturous sublimity in writing cooled by a cautious fear of offence. We should find few of those daring spirits, who bravely venture to be wrong, and who are willing to hazard much for the sake of great acquisitions.² Providence has indulged the world with a period of almost four hundred years refinement; does it not now by degrees sink us into our former ignorance, leaving us only the love of wisdom, while it deprives us of its advantages. Adieu.

LETTER LXIV.³

[The great exchange happiness for shew. Their folly in this respect of use to society.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin in China.

THE princes of Europe have found out a manner of rewarding their subjects who have behaved well, by presenting them with about two yards of blue ribbon, which is worn about the shoulder.

- 1 it will ever] 62; they ever will *PL* begun] 62; began *PL*
 4 appear to . . . taken place] 62; appear, as formerly, universal *PL*
 8 after] 62; to *PL*
 9 know] 62; knew *PL* is] 62; was *PL*
 11 offence] 62; offending *PL*
 17 its] 62; the real *PL*
 25 blue] 62; om. *PL*

¹ Cf. the beginning of chap. ix of the *Enquiry*: 'To acquire a character for learning among the English at present, it is necessary to know much more than is either important or useful. . . . Some thus exhaust their natural sagacity in exploring the intricacies of another man's thought, and have never found leisure to think for themselves; others have carried on learning from that stage, where the good sense of our ancestors thought it too minute or too speculative to instruct or amuse' (above, I, p. 306).

² Goldsmith had developed the thought of the last two sentences at some length in his paper 'The Characteristics of Greatness' in the *Bee*, No. IV.

³ In the *Public Ledger* for Wednesday, 6 August 1760.

They who are honoured with this mark of distinction are called Knights, and the King himself is always the head of the order. This is a very frugal method of recompensing the most important services; and it is very fortunate for Kings that their subjects are
 5 satisfied with such trifling rewards. Should a nobleman happen to lose his leg in battle, the King presents him with two yards of ribbon, and he is paid for the loss of his limb. Should an ambassador spend all his paternal fortune in supporting the honour of his country abroad, the King presents him with two yards of ribbon,
 10 which is to be considered as an equivalent to his estate. In short, while an European King has a yard of blue or green ribbon left, he need be under no apprehensions of wanting statesmen, generals, and soldiers.¹

I cannot sufficiently admire those kingdoms in which men with
 15 large patrimonial estates are willing thus to undergo real hardships for empty favours. A person, already possessed of a competent fortune, who undertakes to enter the career of ambition, feels many real inconveniences from his station, while it procures him no real happiness that he was not possessed of before. He could eat, drink, and
 20 sleep, before he became a courtier, as well, perhaps better, than when invested with his authority. He could command flatterers in a private station as well as in his public capacity, and indulge at home every favourite inclination, uncensured and unseen by the people.

What real good then does an addition to a fortune already sufficient procure? Not any. Could the great man by having his fortune
 25 encreased, encrease also his appetites, then precedence might be attended with real amusement.

Was he by having his one thousand made two, thus enabled to enjoy two wives, or eat two dinners; then indeed he might be excused
 30 for undergoing some pain, in order to extend the sphere of his enjoyments. But on the contrary, he finds his desire for pleasure often lessen, as he takes pains to be able to improve it; and his capacity of enjoyment diminishes as his fortune happens to encrease.

2 the head] 62; at the head PL

10 equivalent to] 62; equivalent for PL

33 diminishes] 62; diminish PL happens to encrease] 62; encreases PL

¹ This paragraph is translated with a few alterations and omissions from the first two paragraphs of lettre lxxv of d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises* (ii. 359-60). The 'blue or green ribbon' of the last sentence may have been intended to suggest, as Gibbs notes, the Order of the Garter and the Order of the Thistle; d'Argens has 'du ruban bleu, ou du ruban rouge'.

Instead therefore of regarding the great with envy, I generally consider them with some share of compassion. I look upon them as a set of good natured misguided people, who are indebted to us and not to themselves for all the happiness they enjoy. For our pleasure, and not their own, they sweat under a cumbrous heap of finery; for 5 our pleasure the lacquied train, the slow parading pageant, with all the gravity of grandeur, moves in review; a single coat, or a single footman, answers all the purposes of the most indolent refinement as well; and those who have twenty, may be said to keep one for their own pleasure, and the other nineteen merely for ours. So true is 10 the observation of Confucius, *that we take greater pains to persuade others that we are happy, than in endeavouring to think so ourselves.*

But though this desire of being seen, of being made the subject of discourse, and of supporting the dignities of an exalted station, be troublesome enough to the ambitious; yet it is well for society 15 that there are men thus willing to exchange ease and safety, for danger and a ribbon. We lose nothing by their vanity, and it would be unkind to endeavour to deprive a child of its rattle. If a Duke or a Dutchess are willing to carry a long train for our entertainment, so much the worse for themselves; if they chuse to exhibit in public 20 with an hundred lacquies and Mameluks in their equipage for our entertainment, still so much the worse for themselves; it is the spectators alone who give and receive the pleasure; they only the sweating figures that swell the pageant.

A Mandarin who took much pride in appearing with a number 25 of jewels on every part of his robe, was once accosted by an old sly Bonze, who following him thro' several streets, and bowing often to the ground, thank'd him for his jewels. What does the man mean, cried the Mandarin. Friend, I never gave thee any of my jewels. No, replied the other; but you have let me look at them, and that 30 is all the use you can make of them yourself; so there is no difference between us, except that you have the trouble of watching them, and that is an employment I don't much desire.¹ Adieu.

15 it is well for society] 62; is it no way prejudicial to society in general, *PL*

17 vanity] 62; vanities *PL*

21 an] *PL*; a 62

24 that] 62; which *PL*

28 jewels] 62; fine jewels *PL*

29 Mandarin. Friend] 62; Mandarin; friend *PL*

29-30 jewels. No] 62; jewels: no *PL*

¹ Cf. Du Halde, ii. 99: 'A Certain rich covetous Bonza had made a Collection of

LETTER LXV.¹

[The history of a philosophic Cobler.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin in China.

5 **T**H^O' not very fond of seeing a pageant myself, yet I am generally pleased with being in the crowd which sees it; it is amusing to observe the effect which such a spectacle has upon the variety of faces, the pleasure it excites in some, the envy in others, and the wishes it raises in all. With this design I lately went to see
10 the entry of a foreign Ambassador, resolved to make one in the mob, to shout as they shouted, to fix with earnestness upon the same frivolous objects, and participate for a while the pleasures and the wishes of the vulgar.²

Struggling here for some time, in order to be first to see the
15 cavalcade as it passed, some one of the crowd unluckily happened to tread upon my shoe, and tore it in such a manner, that I was utterly unqualified to march forward with the main body, and obliged to fall back in the rear. Thus rendered incapable of being a spectator of the shew myself, I was at least willing to observe the
20 spectators, and limped behind like one of the invalids which follow the march of an army.

In this plight, as I was considering the eagerness that appeared on every face, how some bustled to get foremost, and others contented themselves with taking a transient peep when they could; how some
25 praised the four black servants that were stuck behind one of the equipages, and some the ribbons that decorated the horses necks in another; my attention was called off to an object more extraordinary than any I had yet seen.³ A poor cobbler sate in his stall by the way side, and continued to work while the crowd passed by, without

a great many Jewels, which he watch'd very narrowly. Another Bonza, older than him, begged that he would suffer him to see them; and after he had look'd at them for some time, *I thank you*, said he, *for your Jewels. Why thank me?* answers the other, *I did not give you them. But I had the Pleasure to see them*, reply'd the Guest, *and that is all the Advantage you reap from them, except the Trouble of watching them. The Difference is but small, I don't envy you.*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 12 August 1760.

² Cf. the opening paragraph of Letter LIV.

³ From this point to the end of the next paragraph Goldsmith is giving a very free translation of the fifth number of Marivaux's *Le Spectateur françois* (3^e éd.; Paris, 1761), i. 53-55. See Sells, pp. 114-17.

testifying the smallest share of curiosity. I own his want of attention excited mine; and, as I stood in need of his assistance, I thought it best to employ a philosophic cobbler on this occasion: perceiving my business, therefore, he desired me to enter and sit down, took my shoe in his lap, and began to mend it with his usual indifference and 5 taciturnity.

"How, my friend, said I to him, can you continue to work while all those fine things are passing by your door?" "Very fine they are, master, returned the cobbler, for those that like them, to be sure; but what are all those fine things to me? You don't know what 10 it is to be a cobbler, and so much the better for yourself. Your bread is baked, you may go and see sights the whole day, and eat a warm supper when you come home at night; but for me, if I should run hunting after all these fine folk, what should I get by my journey but an appetite, and, God help me, I have too much of that at home 15 already, without stirring out for it. Your people who may eat four meals a day and a supper at night, are but a bad example to such an one as I. No master, as God has called me into this world in order to mend old shoes, I have no business with fine folk, and they no business with me." I here interrupted him with a smile. "See this 20 last, master, continues he, and this hammer; this last and hammer are the two best friends I have in this world; nobody else will be my friend, because I want a friend. The great folks you saw pass by just now have five hundred friends, because they have no occasion for them; now, while I stick to my good friends here, I am very 25 contented; but when I ever so little run after sights and fine things, I begin to hate my work, I grow sad, and have no heart to mend shoes any longer."

This discourse only served to raise my curiosity to know more of a man whom nature had thus formed into a philosopher. I therefore 30 insensibly led him into an history of his adventures: "I have lived, said he, a wandering life, now five and fifty years, here to-day and gone to-morrow; for it was my misfortune, when I was young, to be fond of changing." *You have been a traveller, then, I presume, interrupted I.* "I can't boast much of travelling, continued he, for I have 35 never left the parish in which I was born but three times in my life, that I can remember; but then there is not a street in the whole

8 door] 62; very door PL

17 an] PL; a 62

23 a friend. The] 62; one, while the PL

neighbourhood that I have not lived in, at some time or another. When I began to settle and to take to my business in one street, some unforeseen misfortune, or a desire of trying my luck elsewhere, has removed me, perhaps a whole mile away from my former customers, while some more lucky cobbler would come into my place, and make an handsome fortune among friends of my making: there was one who actually died in a stall that I had left, worth seven pounds seven shillings, all in hard gold, which he had quilted into the waistband of his breeches."

- 10 I could not but smile at these migrations of a man by the fire-side, and continued to ask if he had ever been married. "Aye that I have, master, replied he, for sixteen long years; and a weary life I had of it, Heaven knows. My wife took it into her head, that the only way to thrive in this world was to save money, so, though our comings-in
15 was but about three shillings a week, all that ever she could lay her hands upon she used to hide away from me, though we were obliged to starve the whole week after for it.

- "The first three years we used to quarrel about this every day, and I always got the better; but she had a hard spirit, and still continued
20 to hide as usual; so that I was at last tired of quarrelling, and getting the better, and she scraped and scraped at pleasure, till I was almost starved to death. Her conduct drove me at last in despair to the ale-house: here I used to sit with people who hated home like myself, drank while I had money left, and ran in score when any body would
25 trust me; till at last the landlady, coming one day with a long bill when I was from home, and putting it into my wife's hands; the length of it effectually broke her heart. I searched the whole stall after she was dead for money, but she had hidden it so effectually, that with all my pains I could never find a farthing."

- 30 By this time my shoe was mended, and satisfying the poor artist for his trouble, and rewarding him besides for his information, I took my leave, and returned home to lengthen out the amusement his conversation afforded, by communicating it to my friend. Adieu.

2 to take] 62; take *PL*

6 an] *PL*; a 62

11 married.] 62; married: *PL*

28 money] 62; her money *PL*

LETTER LXVI.¹

[The difference between love and gratitude.]

From Lien Chi Altangi to Hingpo, by the way of Moscom.

GENEROSITY properly applied will supply every other
 external advantage in life, but the love of those we converse 5
 with; it will procure esteem and a conduct resembling real affection,
 but actual love is the spontaneous production of the mind, no
 generosity can purchase, no rewards encrease, nor no liberality con-
 tinue it, the very person who is obliged, has it not in his power to
 force his lingring affections upon the object he should love, and 10
 voluntarily mix passion with gratitude.

Imparted fortune, and well-placed liberality, may procure the
 benefactor good-will, may load the person obliged, with the sense
 of the duty he lies under, to retaliate; this is gratitude, and simple
 gratitude untinctured with love is all the return an ingenuous mind 15
 can bestow for former benefits.

But gratitude and love are almost opposite affections; love is often
 an involuntary passion, placed upon our companions without our
 consent, and frequently conferred without our previous esteem. We
 love some men, we know not why; our tenderness is naturally excited 20
 in all their concerns; we excuse their faults with the same indulgence,
 and approve their virtues with the same applause with which we
 consider our own. While we entertain the passion it pleases us, we
 cherish it with delight, and give it up with reluctance, and love for
 love is all the reward we expect or desire. Gratitude on the contrary 25
 is never conferred, but where there have been previous endeavours

4 GENEROSITY properly applied] 62; A Proper application of benefits, my son, *PL*

6-7 it will . . . but actual] 62; *om. PL*

8-9 continue it,] 62; can continue, if *PL*

10 upon the . . . should love] 62; *om. PL*

11 passion with gratitude] 62; gratitude with passion *PL*

13 good-will] 62; esteem *PL*

14-15 simple gratitude . . . with love] 62; gratitude for benefits received *PL*

15 ingenuous] 62; ingenious *PL*

16 for former benefits] 62; *om. PL*

17 gratitude and love] 62; love and gratitude *PL*

19 previous] 62; *om. PL*

24 give it up] 62; part from it *PL*

24-25 and love for love is] 62; love for love being *PL*

25 Gratitude] *PL*; *par. 62*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 19 August 1760.

to excite it, we consider it as a debt, and our spirits wear a load till we have discharged the obligation. Every acknowledgment of gratitude is a circumstance of humiliation; and some are found to submit to frequent mortifications of this kind, proclaiming what
 5 obligations they owe, merely because they think it in some measure cancels the debt.

Thus love is the most easy and agreeable, and gratitude the most humiliating affection of the mind; we never reflect on the man we *love*, without exulting in our choice, while he who has bound us to
 10 him by *benefits* alone, rises to our idea as a person to whom we have, in some measure, forfeited our freedom. Love and gratitude are seldom therefore found in the same breast without impairing each other; we may tender the one or the other singly to those we converse with, but cannot command both together. By attempting to
 15 encrease, we diminish them; the mind becomes bankrupt under too large obligations;¹ all additional benefits lessen every hope of future return, and bar up every avenue that leads to tenderness.

In all our connexions with society therefore, it is not only generous but prudent to appear insensible of the value of those favours we
 20 bestow, and endeavour to make the obligation seem as slight as possible. Love must be taken by stratagem and not by open force; we should seem ignorant that we oblige and leave the mind at full liberty to give or refuse its affections, for constraint may indeed leave the receiver still grateful, but it will certainly produce disgust.
 25 If to procure gratitude be our only aim, there is no great art in

1 wear] 62; were *PL*

5 obligations] 62; *om. PL* merely because they think] 62; as thinking *PL*

6 debt] 62; obligation *PL*

7 love] 62; one *PL* and gratitude] 62; the other *PL*

11 Love and gratitude] 62; They *PL*

13 may tender . . . other singly] 62; must be contented either with giving love or gratitude *PL*

14 but cannot command] 62; for they cannot have *PL*

14-15 By attempting . . . diminish them] 62; Men may be too much obliged *PL*

16 obligations;] 62; an arrear, and *PL* lessen] 62; only diminish *PL*

17 return, and . . . to tenderness] 62; return *PL*

20-21 and endeavour . . . possible. Love] 62; love and friendship *PL*

22 we should] 62; in conferring benefits we should *PL*

23-24 may indeed . . . but it] 62; *om. PL*

¹ Cf. Goldsmith's 'Memoirs of M. de Voltaire': 'There are some obligations too great for gratitude. That is a debt the poor pay as an equivalent for favours; but when those become so great that no gratitude can equal, the mind becomes bankrupt. . . .'

making the acquisition; a benefit conferred demands a just acknowledgement, and we have a right to insist upon our due.

But it were much more prudent to forego our right on such an occasion, and exchange it, if we can, for love. We receive but little advantage from repeated protestations of gratitude, but they cost 5 him very much from whom we exact them in return; exacting a grateful acknowledgement is demanding a debt by which the creditor is not advantaged, and the debtor pays with reluctance.

As *Mencius* the philosopher was travelling in the pursuit of wisdom, night overtook him at the foot of a gloomy mountain, remote 10 from the habitations of men. Here as he was straying, while rain and thunder conspired to make solitude still more hideous, he perceived a hermit's cell, and approaching, asked for shelter: Enter, cries the hermit, in a severe tone, men deserve not to be obliged, but it would be imitating their ingratitude to treat them as they deserve. Come 15 in: examples of vice may sometimes strengthen us in the ways of virtue.¹

After a frugal meal, which consisted of roots and tea, *Mencius* could not repress his curiosity to know why the hermit had retired from mankind, the actions of whom taught the truest lessons of 20 wisdom. Mention not the name of man, cries the hermit, with indignation; here let me live retired from a base ungrateful world; here, among the beasts of the forest, I shall find no flatterers; the lion is a generous enemy, and the dog a faithful friend, but man, base man

2-3 due. But] 62; due; but *PL*

3 prudent] 62; prudent however *PL*

4 occasion, and . . . love. We] 62; occasion; for we *PL*

5 but] 62; while *PL*

6-8 return; exacting . . . with reluctance] 62; return *PL*

9 the pursuit] 62; pursuit *PL*

20 the actions of whom] 62; whose actions *PL*

21 cries] 62; cried *PL*

24 a generous] 62; an open *PL*

¹ This paragraph is derived from the thirteenth paper in Marivaux's *Le Spectateur françois* (3^e éd.; Paris, 1761), i. 165: 'Le fameux Scythe *Anacharsis*, un jour surpris par une nuit obscure, aperçut une maison bâtie au bas d'une Montagne. Il vint y demander l'hospitalité, & ce fut le Maître même de la maison à qui il parla. . . . Entrez, dit-il à *Anacharsis*, d'un ton sévère. Les hommes en général ne méritent pas qu'on les oblige; mais ce seroit être aussi méchant qu'eux, que de les traiter comme ils le méritent. Venez: les vices de leur cœur m'ont valu des exemples de vertu.' The remainder of the paper bears no close resemblance to the rest of Goldsmith's story. This parallel was pointed out by Sells, pp. 82, 117.

- can poison the bowl, and smile while he presents it.¹ *You have been used ill by mankind?* interrupted the philosopher shrewdly. Yes, returned the hermit, on mankind I have exhausted my whole fortune, and this staff, and that cup, and those roots are all that I have in
- 5 return. *Did you bestow your fortune, or did you only lend it?* returned Mencius. I bestowed it, undoubtedly, replied the other, for where were the merit of being a money-lender? *Did they ever own that they received it?* still adds the philosopher. A thousand times, cries the hermit, they every day loaded me with professions of gratitude,
- 10 for obligations received, and solicitations for future favours. *If then,* says Mencius, smiling, *you did not lend your fortune, in order to have it returned, it is unjust to accuse them of ingratitude; they own'd themselves obliged, you expected no more, and they certainly earn'd each favour by frequently acknowledging the obligation.* The hermit was
- 15 struck with the reply, and surveying his guest with emotion, I have heard of the great Mencius, and you certainly are the man; I am now fourscore years old, but still a child in wisdom, take me back to the school of man, and educate me as one of the most ignorant and the youngest of your disciples!
- 20 Indeed, my son, it is better to have friends in our passage through life, than grateful dependants; and as love is a more willing, so it is a more lasting tribute than extorted obligation. As we are uneasy when greatly obliged, Gratitude once refused, can never after be recovered; the mind that is base enough to disallow the just return,
- 25 instead of feeling any uneasiness upon recollection, triumphs in its new acquired freedom, and in some measure is pleased with conscious baseness.

1 have] 62; have then PL

2 shrewdly] 62; drily PL

5 fortune] 62; fortune among them PL

7 were] 62; was PL

10 obligations] 62; favours PL favours] 62; om. PL

12 unjust] 62; injustice PL

13-14 earn'd each . . . frequently acknowledging] 62; earn a favour, who stoop to acknowledge PL

18 school of man] 62; world PL

19 the youngest of your] 62; youngest of thy PL

21 grateful dependants] 62; admirers PL it is] 62; is it PL

¹ There is a similarity between this attack on man and that of Asem in 'The Proceedings of Providence Vindicated. An Eastern Tale', first published in the *Royal Magazine* for December 1759. Asem, like the hermit here, had retired from the world after giving away his fortune to men who proved ungrateful. See below, III, pp. 58-60.

Very different is the situation of disagreeing friends, their separation produces mutual uneasiness: Like that divided being in fabulous creation,¹ their sympathetic souls once more desire their former union, the joys of both are imperfect, their gayest moments tinctured with uneasiness; each seeks for the smallest concessions to clear the way to a wished for explanation; the most trifling acknowledgement, the slightest accident serves to effect a mutual reconciliation. But instead of pursuing the thought, permit me to soften the severity of advice, by an European story which will fully illustrate my meaning.

A fidler and his wife, who had rubbed through life, as most couples usually do, sometimes good friends, at others not quite so well; one day happened to have a dispute, which was conducted with becoming spirit on both sides. The wife was sure she was right, and the husband was resolved to have his own way. What was to be done in such a case? the quarrel grew worse by explanations, and at last the fury of both rose to such a pitch, that they made a vow never to sleep together in the same bed for the future. This was the most rash vow that could be imagined, for they still were friends at bottom, and besides they had but one bed in the house; however, resolved they were to go through with it, and at night the fiddle case was laid in bed between them, in order to make a separation. In this manner they continued for three weeks; every night the fiddle case being placed as a barrier to divide them. By this time, however, each heartily repented of their vow, their resentment was at an end, and their love began to return, they wished the fiddle case away, but both had too much spirit to begin. One night, however, as they were both lying awake with the detested fiddle case between them, the husband happened to sneeze; to which the wife, as is usual in such

2 uneasiness: Like] 62; uneasiness, like *PL*

3 creation,] 62; creation; *PL*

7-8 reconciliation] 62; agreement *PL*

8 But] *PL*; *par.* 62

9 advice] 62; my advice *PL* will fully] 62; fully serves to *PL*

16 explanations] 62; their explanations *PL*

17 of both] 62; *om.* *PL* they] 62; each *PL*

18 together] 62; *om.* *PL*

21 and at] 62; and, as they had not separate beds, at *PL*

22 in bed] 62; *om.* *PL*

24 barrier] 62; barrier, in bed, *PL* By] *PL*; *par.* 62

29 which] 62; this *PL*

¹ Probably Plato's *Symposium* 189-92.

cases, bid God bless him; *Ay, but*, returns the husband, *woman, do you say that from your heart?* Indeed, I do, my poor Nicholas, cries his wife, I say it with all my heart. *If so then, says the husband, we had as good remove the fiddle case.*

5

LETTER LXVII.¹

[The folly of attempting to learn wisdom by being recluse.]

From Lien Chi Altangi to Hingpo, by the way of Moscow.

BOOKS, my son, while they teach us to respect the interests
of others, often make us unmindful of our own; while they
10 instruct the youthful reader to grasp at social happiness, he grows
miserable in detail, and attentive to universal harmony, often forgets
that he himself has a part to sustain in the concert. I dislike there-
fore the philosopher who describes the inconveniences of life in such
pleasing colours, that the pupil grows enamoured of distress, longs
15 to try the charms of poverty, meets it without dread, nor fears its
inconveniencies till he severely feels them.

A youth who has thus spent his life among books, new to the
world, and unacquainted with man but by philosophic information,
may be considered as a being, whose mind is filled with the vulgar
20 errors of the wise; utterly unqualified for a journey through life, yet
confident of his own skill in the direction, he sets out with confi-
dence, blunders on with vanity, and finds himself at last undone.

He first has learned from books, and then lays it down as a maxim,
that all mankind are virtuous or vicious in excess, and he has been
25 long taught to detest vice and love virtue;² warm therefore in attach-

¹ *woman*] 62; *Giles PL*

³ *so then,*] 62; *so, then PL* *we*] 62; *I fancy we PL*

9-10 while they instruct . . . happiness, he] 62; the youthful reader while he grasps
at social happiness *PL*

12 to sustain in the concert] 62; in the contest to sustain *PL*

14 colours] 62; colour *PL*

23 has learned . . . and then] 62; *om. PL*

24 virtuous or vicious in excess] 62; extremely virtuous or visious *PL*

25 vice and love virtue] 62; the one and love the other *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 22 August 1760.

² Cf. Goldsmith's letter to his brother Henry, c. 13 January 1759: 'And in general take the word of a man who has seen the world, and studied human nature more by experience than precept, take my word for it I say that books teach us very little of the world. . . . I had learn'd from books to love virtue, before I was taught from experience the necessity of being selfish' (*Collected Letters*, pp. 60, 61).

ments and steadfast in enmity, he treats every creature as a friend or foe; expects from those he loves unerring integrity, and consigns his enemies to the reproach of wanting every virtue. On this principle he proceeds; and here begin his disappointments; upon a closer inspection of human nature, he perceives that he should have moderated his friendship, and softened his severity; for he often finds the excellencies of one part of mankind clouded with vice, and the faults of the other brightened with virtue, he finds no character so sanctified that has not its failings, none so infamous but has somewhat to attract our esteem; he beholds impiety in lawn, and fidelity in fetters. 10

He now therefore, but too late, perceives that his regards should have been more cool, and his hatred less violent; that the truly wise seldom court romantic friendships with the good, and avoid, if possible, the resentment even of the wicked; every moment gives him fresh instances that the bonds of friendship are broken if drawn too closely, and that those whom he has treated with disrespect more than retaliate the injury; at length therefore he is obliged to confess, that he has declared war upon the vicious half of mankind, without being able to form an alliance among the virtuous to espouse his quarrel. 20

Our book-taught philosopher however is now too far advanced to recede, and tho' poverty be the just consequence of the many enemies his conduct has created, yet he is resolved to meet it without shrinking; philosophers have described poverty in most charming colours, and even his vanity is touched in thinking, that he shall shew the world, in himself, one more example of patience, fortitude, and resignation. *Come then, O Poverty, for what is there in thee dreadful to the WISE; temperance, health, and frugality, walk in thy train, cheerfulness and liberty are ever thy companions. Shall any be ashamed* 30

3-4 On this . . . and here] 62; Here then *PL*, with *par*.

6-7 severity; for . . . of mankind] 62; severity, for the excellencies of one part of mankind; he often finds *PL*

10 beholds] 62; sees *PL*

12 therefore, but too late,] 62; therefore *PL*

18-19 therefore he . . . to confess,] 62; therefore, too late, he deplors *PL*

19 the vicious] 62; one *PL*

20 virtuous] 62; rest *PL*

23-24 the many . . . has created] 62; his conduct *PL*

25 poverty] 62; it *PL*

28-4 (p. 278) *Come then . . . philosopher's resignation.*] 62; no *italics PL*

30 *companions. Shall*] 62; companions; shall *PL*

*of thee of whom Cincinnatus was not ashamed? the running brook, the herbs of the field can amply satisfy nature, man wants but little, nor that little long;*¹ *come then, O Poverty, while kings stand by and gaze with admiration, at the true philosopher's resignation.*

- 5 The goddess appears, for Poverty ever comes at the call; but alas! he finds her by no means the charming figure books and his warm imagination had painted. As when an eastern bride whom her friends and relations had long described as a model of perfection, pays her first visit, the longing bridegroom lifts the veil to see a face he had
10 never seen before, but instead of a countenance blazing with beauty like the sun, he beholds deformity shooting icicles to his heart, such appears Poverty to her new entertainer, all the fabric of enthusiasm is at once demolished, and a thousand miseries rise upon its ruins, while Contempt with pointing finger is foremost in the hideous
15 procession.

The poor man now finds that he can get no kings to look at him while he is eating; he finds that in proportion as he grows poor, the world turns its back upon him, and gives him leave to act the philosopher in all the majesty of solitude; it might be agreeable
20 enough to play the philosopher, while we are conscious that mankind are spectators, but what signifies wearing the mask of sturdy contentment, and mounting the stage of restraint, when not one creature will assist at the exhibition! Thus is he forsaken of men, while his fortitude wants the satisfaction even of self-applause; for either he
25 does not feel his present calamities, and that is natural *insensibility*, or he disguises his feelings, and that is *dissimulation*.

Spleen now begins to take up the man; not distinguishing in his resentments, he regards all mankind with detestation, and com-

¹ *ashamed?*] 62; *ashamed*; PL

⁴ *at the true philosopher's resignation.*] 62; contentment and the philosopher is ready to receive thee! PL

⁵ *at the call*] 62; *when called for* PL

⁷ *As when*] 62; *Like* PL

⁸⁻⁹ *pays her first visit,*] 62; *om.* PL

¹⁹ *might be*] 62; *is* PL

²⁰ *play the philosopher*] 62; *be philosophers* PL

²¹ *sturdy*] 62; *om.* PL

²² *of restraint*] 62; *om.* PL

²⁶ *feelings*] 62; *feeling* PL

²⁸⁻¹ (p. 279) and commencing man-hater, seeks] 62; commences man-hater, and seeks for PL

¹ From Edward Young, *The Complaint: or, Night-Thoughts*, Night the Fourth: 'Man wants but Little; nor that Little, long.'

mencing man-hater, seeks solitude to be at liberty to rail. It has been said that he who retires to solitude, is either a beast or an angel; the censure is too severe, and the praise unmerited; the discontented being, who retires from society, is generally some good natured man, who has begun life without experience, and knew not how to gain 5 it in his intercourse with mankind. Adieu.

LETTER LXVIII.¹

[Quacks ridiculed. Some particularly mentioned.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

10

I Formerly acquainted thee, most grave *Fum*, with the excellence of the *English* in the art of healing.² The *Chinese* boast their skill in pulses,³ the *Siamese* their botanical knowledge, but the *English* advertising physicians alone, of being the great restorers of health, the dispensers of youth, and the insurers of longevity. I can 15 never enough admire the sagacity of this country for the encouragement given to the professors of this art; with what indulgence does she foster up those of her own growth, and kindly cherish those that come from abroad. Like a skilful gardener she invites them from every foreign climate to herself. Here every great exotic strikes root 20

1 It] *PL*; *par.* 62

2 beast] 62; brute *PL*

4 man] 62; unexperienced man, such as has been represented *PL*

5-6 without experience . . . mankind. Adieu.] 62; upon wrong principles, his intercourse with mankind was too weak or too vain to correct the mistake. *PL*

7 In 65 and 66 *ESSAY XX* consists of the first two paragraphs of Letter XXIV followed by major portions of this letter. The omissions in the essay version are indicated below.

11-15 I Formerly . . . of longevity.] *PL*, 62; *om.* 65, 66

11 *Fum*] 62; *Fum Hoam PL*

12 boast] 62; may boast *PL*

13 *Siamese*] 62; *Siamese Borses PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 26 (misdated 25) August 1760.

² See Letter XXIV.

³ See Du Halde, ii. 184: 'They [the Chinese] pretend, by the Beating of the Pulse only, to discover the Cause of the Disease, and in what Part of the Body it resides: In effect, their able Physicians predict pretty exactly all the Symptoms of a Disease; and it is chiefly this, that has rendered the *Chinese* Physicians so famous in the World.'

as soon as imported, and feels the genial beam of favour; while the mighty metropolis, like one vast munificent dunghill, receives them indiscriminately to her breast, and supplies each with more than native nourishment.

- 5 In other countries the physician pretends to cure disorders in the lump, the same doctor who combats the gout in the toe, shall pretend to prescribe for a pain in the head, and he who at one time cures a consumption, shall at another give drugs for a dropsy. How absurd and ridiculous! this is being a mere jack of all trades. Is the animal
10 machine less complicated than a brass pin? Not less than ten different hands are required to make a pin, and shall the body be set right by one single operator?

- The *English* are sensible of the force of this reasoning; they have therefore one doctor for the eyes, another for the toes; they have
15 their sciatica doctors and inoculating doctors; they have one doctor who is modestly content with securing them from bugbites, and five hundred who prescribe for the bite of mad dogs.

- The learned are not here retired with vicious modesty from public view, for every dead wall is covered with their names, their abilities,
20 their amazing cures and places of abode. Few patients can escape falling into their hands, unless blasted by lightening, or struck dead with some sudden disorder; it may sometimes happen, that a stranger who does not understand *English*, or a countryman who cannot read, dies without ever hearing of the vivifying drops, or restorative elec-
25 tuary; but for my part, before I was a week in town, I had learned to bid the whole catalogue of disorders defiance, and was perfectly acquainted with the names and the medicines of every great man, or great woman of them all.

- But as nothing pleases curiosity more than anecdotes of the great,
30 however minute or trifling, I must present you, inadequate as my abilities are to the subject, with some account of those personages who lead in this honourable profession.

1 favour] 62-66; her favour *PL*

2 metropolis] 62-66; city of *London PL*

3 breast] 62-66; bosom *PL*

10 brass pin? Not] 62-66; common brass pin: yet not *PL*

11 a pin] *PL*, 62; a brass pin 65, 66

13-14 reasoning; they have therefore] 62-66; reasoning, so that they have *PL*

17 mad dogs] 62-66; a mad dog *PL*

18-28 The learned . . . them all.] *PL*, 62; *om.* 65, 66

25 my] 62; my own *PL*

31 some account] *PL*, 62; an account of one or two 65, 66

The first upon the list of glory is doctor *Richard Rock*,¹ F.U.N. This great man is short of stature, is fat, and waddles as he walks. He always wears a white three-tail'd wig nicely combed, and frizzled upon each cheek. Sometimes he carries a cane, but a hat never; it is indeed very remarkable, that this extraordinary personage should 5 never wear an hat, but so it is an hat he never wears. He is usually drawn at the top of his own bills, sitting in his arm-chair, holding a little bottle between his finger and thumb, and surrounded with rotten teeth, nippers, pills, pacquets and gallypots. No man can promise fairer or better than he; for, as he observes, *be your disorder* 10 *never so far gone, be under no uneasiness, make yourself quite easy, I can cure you.*

The next in fame, though by some reckoned of equal pretensions, is doctor *Timothy Franks*, F.O.G.H. living in a place called the *Old-Bailey*. As *Rock* is remarkably squab, his great rival *Franks* is 15 remarkably tall. He was born in the year of the christian æra 1692, and

1 F.U.N.] 62, 65; M.L.F.U.N. PL; om. 66

2 This] 62-66; this PL is fat] 62-66; fat PL

3 frizzled] 65, 66; frizzed PL, 62

6 wear an] PL, 62; wear a 65, 66 an hat he never wears] 65, 66; he never wears an hat PL, 62

7 drawn] 62-66; drawn, but with no flattering likeness, PL

9 nippers,] 62-66; om. PL

10 or] PL, 65, 66; nor 62

11 I] 62-66; he PL

14 F.O.G.H.] PL-65; om. 66 a place called] PL, 62; om. 65, 66

15-16 As *Rock* . . . remarkably tall.] 62-66; om. PL

16 remarkably tall] 66; as remarkably tall 62, 65 He] 62-66; Dr. *Franks* PL

16-1 (p. 282) and is] 62-66; so that he is PL

¹ The three men specifically ridiculed in this letter—Rock, Franks, and Walker—advertised extensively in such papers as the *Daily Advertiser* and the *Public Advertiser*; and all three—like most of the other advertising doctors of the day—chiefly proclaimed their ability to cure venereal infection. Rock advertised his '*Purging Antivenereal ELECTUARY*' and his '*Original JESUITS DROPS*' which '*finish the Cure in all VENEREAL COMPLAINTS*'; Franks was '*of 34 Years Practice in Venereal Cases*'; and Walker advertised his '*true Original genuine Patent JESUITS DROPS, or ELIXIR of HEALTH*' as unrivalled '*in all VENEREAL INJURIES*'. Goldsmith had made a slighting reference to Franks and Rock in this connexion in a notice in the *Monthly Review* for May 1757 (above, I, p. 25); and the three were singled out in a criticism of *A Short Exposition of a Sure and Easy Method for Preventing the Communication of the Venereal Distemper in the Critical Review* for January 1760 (ix. 73), where the reviewer says ironically: '*We are afraid this great discovery will interfere with the interest of those medical worthies, Drs. Rock, Franks, and Walker. . .*' It may be noted that Goldsmith was free to attack these men in the *Public Ledger*, because the policy of that paper did not permit their advertising there; see the number for 8 September 1760: '*It is well known that bathing in the sea is very salutary . . . for certain disorders which are never suffered to be advertised in the Public Ledger.*'

is, while I now write, exactly sixty-eight years three months and four days old. Age, however, has no ways impaired his usual health and vivacity; I am told, he generally walks with his breast open. This gentleman, who is of a mixed reputation, is particularly remarkable
 5 for a becoming assurance, which carries him gently through life; for except doctor *Rock*, none are more blest with the advantage of face than doctor *Franks*.

And yet the great have their foibles as well as the little. I am almost ashamed to mention it. Let the foibles of the great rest in peace. Yet
 10 I must impart the whole to my friend. These two great men are actually now at variance; yes, my dear *Fum Hoam*, by the head of our grandfather, they are now at variance like mere men, mere common mortals. *Rock* advises the world to beware of bog-trotting quacks; *Franks* retorts the wit and the sarcasm, by fixing on his rival
 15 the odious appellation of *Dumplin Dick*.¹ He calls the serious doctor *Rock Dumplin Dick*! Head of *Confucius*, what profanation! *Dumplin Dick*! What a pity, ye powers, that the learned, who were born mutually to assist in enlightening the world, should thus differ among themselves, and make even the profession ridiculous! Sure
 20 the world is wide enough, at least, for two great personages to figure

1-2 and four days] 62-66; *om. PL*

2 ways] 62-66; way *PL*

3 vivacity; I] 65, 66; vivacity, and I *PL*; vivacity, I 62

6 advantage] 66; advantages *PL*-65

7 doctor *Franks*] 62-66; he *PL*

8 little.] 62-66; little, *PL*

9-10 it. Let . . . friend. These] 62-66; it; but these *PL*

10 to my friend] 62; *om. 65, 66*

11-12 yes, my . . . at variance] *PL*, 62; *om. 65, 66*

12 mere men,] 62-66; *om. PL*

13 the mortals] 62-66; mortals, having engaged the whole literary world on one side or the other of the quarrel *PL* *Rock*] 65, 66; The champion *Rock PL*, 62

14 quacks;] 65, 66; quacks, while *PL*, 62 sarcasm] 65, 66; sarcasm, for they have both a world of wit *PL*, 62

16 Head of *Confucius*, what] *PL*-65; What 66

16-17 profanation! *Dumplin Dick*!] 62-66; profanation! *PL*

17 ye powers,] *PL*-65; *om. 66*

¹ Prior has the following note: 'In the journals of the time Franks advertised in bills against Rock: "Be not *Rocked* into eternity by that vain and impudent pretender *Dumpling Dick*, who still lives at the gate of the inn where he was once porter." To which Rock rejoined: "If you would avoid destruction, avoid the Old Bailey; for there lives an old soldier discharged by the *beat of drum*, who has killed his thousands, but not in battle; his pills are much more fatal than were his *bullets*!"' (*Works*, ii. 276). I have not seen these advertisements.

in; men of science should leave controversy to the little world below them, and then we might see *Rock* and *Franks* walking together hand in hand, smiling onward to immortality.

Next to these is doctor *Walker*, preparator of his own medicines. This gentleman is remarkable for an aversion to quacks, frequently 5 cautioning the public to be careful into what hands they commit their safety; by which he would insinuate, that if they do not employ him alone, they must be undone.¹ His public spirit is equal to his success. Not for himself, but his country, is the gally-pot prepared and the drops sealed up with proper directions for any part of the 10 town or country. All this is for his country's good, so that he is now grown old in the practice of physic and virtue, and to use his own elegance of expression, *there is not such another medicine as his in the world again.*

This, my friend, is a formidable triumvirate, and yet, formidable 15 as they are, I am resolved to defend the honour of *Chinese* physic against them all. I have made a vow to summon doctor *Rock* to a solemn disputation in all the mysteries of the profession, before the face of every *Philomath*, student in astrology, and member of the learned societies. I adhere to, and venerate the doctrines of old 20 *Wang-shu-ho*.² In the very teeth of opposition I will maintain, **that the heart is the son of the liver, which has the kidneys for its mother, and the stomach for its wife.* I have therefore drawn up a disputation challenge, which is to be sent speedily, to this effect:

* See Du Halde, vol. II. fol. p. 185.

25

3 smiling] 62-66; with smiling countenances, *PL*

4-end of the letter om. 65, 66

4-5 medicines. This] 62; medicines; this *PL*

7 insinuate] 62; intimate *PL*

9 success. Not] 62; success, not *PL*

23 wife.] 62; wife; *PL*

24 to this] 62; and to this *PL*

¹ In an advertisement that appears frequently in the *Public Advertiser* in 1760, Walker, after extolling the superiority of his Jesuits Drops, continues: 'Notwithstanding which some pretended Doctors endeavour to palm on the World pernicious poisonous Nos-trums, under deceitful pompous Titles; the Purchasers of which pernicious Medicines, as soon as they have taken but a Dose or two, finding themselves deceived, and rather worse than better, are obliged to apply for a certain Cure to my never failing WALKER's Patent true and original JESUITS DROPS. . . . Veritas prevaleat.'

² See Du Halde, ii. 184: 'All the *Chinese* acknowledge the Author of this Treatise of the Pulse to be *Wang-shu-ho*, who lived . . . some hundred Years before Christ.' Goldsmith quotes the treatise in the next sentence.

I *Lien Chi Altangi* ㄌㄧㄣˊ ㄑㄧˊ ㄞㄌㄥˊ ㄉㄨˋ ㄒㄩˋ ㄆㄧˋ. native of *Honan* in *China*, to *Richard Rock*, F.U.N. native of *Garbage-alley* in *Wapping*, defiance. Though, Sir, I am perfectly sensible of your importance, though no stranger to your studies in the paths of nature, yet there may be many things
 5 in the art of physic with which you are yet unacquainted. I know full well a doctor thou art, great *Rock*, and so am I. Wherefore I challenge, and do hereby invite you to a trial of learning upon hard problems, and knotty physical points. In this debate we will calmly investigate the whole theory and practice of medicine, botany and
 10 chymistry, and I invite all the philomaths, with many of the lecturers in medicine, to be present at the dispute: which I hope will be carried on with due decorum, with proper gravity, and as befits men of erudition and science, among each other. But before we meet face to face, I would thus publicly, and in the face of the whole world,
 15 desire you to answer me one question; I ask it with the same earnestness with which you have often solicited the public; answer me I say at once, without having recourse to your physical dictionary, which of those three disorders, incident to the human body, is the most fatal, the *syncope*, *parenthesis*, or *apoplexy*? I beg your reply
 20 may be as public as this my demand*. I am, as hereafter may be, your admirer or your rival. Adieu.

* The day after this was published the editor received an answer, in which the doctor seems to be of opinion, that the apoplexy is most fatal.

1 ㄌㄧㄣˊ ㄑㄧˊ ㄞㄌㄥˊ ㄉㄨˋ ㄒㄩˋ ㄆㄧˋ.] 62; ㄘㄧˊ ㄅㄧˊ ㄇㄧˊ ㄉㄨˋ ㄒㄩˋ ㄆㄧˋ. *PL* *Honan*] 62; *Leotung* *PL*

2 F.U.N.] 62; L.M.F.U.N. *PL* defiance] 62; greeting, or, if he thinks proper, defiance *PL*

13 other.] 62; other. And I hereby object in advance to your speaking or disputing in such languages as I am unacquainted with. You are at liberty to use English, Chinese, Latin, Greek, Arabic, French, Spanish, or Italian, in these you may speak; but if, through an affectation of learning, you chuse to dispute in the Koptic, the Hebrew, the Syriac, or the Samaritan, I shall look upon it only as a subterfuge to avoid this fair invitation, nor will all your learning avail. *PL*

17-18 dictionary] 62; lexicon *PL*

19 *parenthesis*, or] 62; the *paragoge*, or the *PL* I beg] 62; And I beg *PL*

22-23 *The day . . . most fatal.] 62; *om. PL*

LETTER LXIX.¹

[The fear of mad dogs ridiculed.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

INDULGENT nature seems to have exempted this island from
 many of those epidemic evils which are so fatal in other parts of
 the world. A want of rain for a few days beyond the expected season
 in China, spreads famine, desolation, and terror, over the whole
 country; the winds that blow from the brown bosom of the western
 desert are impregnated with death in every gale, but in this fortunate
 land of Britain, the inhabitant courts health in every breeze, and the
 husbandman ever sows in joyful expectation.

But tho' the nation be exempt from real evils, think not, my friend,
 that it is more happy on this account than others. The people are
 afflicted, it is true, with neither famine nor pestilence, but then there
 is a disorder peculiar to the country, which every season makes
 strange ravages among them; it spreads with pestilential rapidity,
 and infects almost every rank of people, what is still more strange the
 natives have no name for this peculiar malady, tho' well known to
 foreign physicians by the appellation of *Epidemic terror*.

A season is never known to pass in which the people are not
 visited by this cruel calamity in one shape or another, seemingly
 different, tho' ever the same; one year it issues from a baker's shop in
 the shape of a sixpenny loaf,² the next it takes the appearance of a
 comet with a fiery tail,³ the third it threatens like a flat-bottomed

1-4 LETTER LXIX . . . in China.] ESSAY XIII. 65, 66

7 for] 65, 66; but for *PL*, 62

8 China] *PL*, 62; some parts of the globe 65, 66

9-10 the winds . . . every gale.] *PL*, 62; *om.* 65, 66

13-14 think not . . . it is] *PL*, 62; it is not 65, 66

14 The people] 65, 66; They *PL*, 62

25 the third] 65, 66; a third *PL*, 62

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 29 August 1760.

² Probably 1758. See the *Gentleman's Magazine*, xxviii (1758), 7: 'As much has been said about the adulteration of bread and flour, the following methods to detect it, may serve to gratify curiosity or discover frauds, where any such are suspected.' And see *ibid.*, pp. 322-5, for 'An Abstract of a Bill lately passed for the due making of Bread'.

³ Probably 1759, when Halley's comet returned. See *ibid.* xxix (1759), 154: 'This [news of the comet's return], I am told, has reviv'd the expectations of some, and the

boat,¹ and the fourth it carries consternation in the bite of a mad dog. The people when once infected lose their relish for happiness, saunter about with looks of despondence, ask after the calamities of the day, and receive no comfort but in heightening each others
 5 distress. It is insignificant how remote or near, how weak or powerful the object of terror may be, when once they resolve to fright and be frightened, the meekest trifles sow consternation and dismay, each proportions his fears not to the object, but to the dread he discovers in the countenance of others, for when once the fermenta-
 10 tion is begun, it goes on of itself, tho' the original cause be discontinued which first set it in motion.

A dread of mad dogs is the *epidemic terror* which now prevails, and the whole nation is at present actually groaning under the malignity of its influence.² The people sally from their houses with that cir-
 15 cumspection which is prudent in such as expect a mad dog at every turning. The physician publishes his prescription,³ the beadle prepares his halter,⁴ and a few of unusual bravery arm themselves with boots and buff gloves,⁵ in order to face the enemy if he should offer to attack them. In short, the whole people stand bravely upon their
 20 defence, and seem by their present spirit to shew a resolution of being tamely bit by mad dogs no longer.

1 the fourth] 65, 66; a fourth *PL*, 62 in] 65, 66; as *PL*; at 62

3 after the calamities] 62-66; the news *PL*

9-10 the fermentation] *PL*-65; fermentation 66

21 being] 65, 66; not being *PL*, 62 no] 65, 66; any *PL*, 62

apprehensions of many others, who, a year or two ago, were taught foolishly to infer no less than a dissolution of the frame of nature, from a near approach of this Comet to our earth in *May*.⁷

¹ The greatest fear of invasion by the French in flat-bottomed boats seems to have been in the spring and early summer of 1759. See the mention of 'flat-bottom'd boats at Havre' in Letter V and the note.

² The panic about mad dogs was at its height when this letter appeared; the five preceding numbers of the *Public Ledger* had carried articles or letters concerning mad dogs, and all the other periodicals were full of the subject.

³ The papers all published cures for the bite of mad dogs, and the *Public Ledger* had recently printed two—one signed R. James on 7 August and the other by J. Parsons, M.D., on 23 August 1760.

⁴ On the two days preceding the publication of this letter the *Public Ledger* had carried an order by the mayor for 'constables, beadles, and watchmen' to kill all dogs found in the streets of London.

⁵ Dobson quotes *Lloyd's Evening Post* for 27-29 August 1760: 'Boots and thick gloves are thought such a preservative against the bites of mad dogs, that a person counted not less than forty people that he met so equipped, between Temple Bar and St. Paul's.'

Their manner of knowing whether a dog be mad or no, somewhat resembles the ancient Gothic custom of trying witches. The old woman suspected was tied hand and foot and thrown into the water. If she swam then she was instantly carried off to be burnt for a witch, if she sunk, then indeed she was acquitted of the charge, but drown'd 5 in the experiment.¹ In the same manner a crowd gather round a dog suspected of madness, and they begin by teizing the devoted animal on every side. If he attempts to stand upon the defensive and bite, then is he unanimously found guilty, for *a mad dog always snaps at every thing*. If, on the contrary, he strives to escape by running away, 10 then he can expect no compassion, for *mad dogs always run strait forward before them*.

It is pleasant enough for a neutral being like me, who have no share in those ideal calamities, to mark the stages of this national disease. The terror at first feebly enters with a disregarded story of 15 a little dog, that had gone through a neighbouring village, which was thought to be mad by several who had seen him. The next account comes, that a mastiff ran through a certain town, and had bit five geese, which immediately ran mad, foamed at the bill, and died in great agonies soon after. Then comes an affecting history of a little 20 boy bit in the leg, and gone down to be dipt in the salt water.² When the people have sufficiently shuddered at that, they are next congealed with a frightful account of a man who was said lately to have

2 Gothic] 65, 66; European *PL*, 62

8 side. If] 65, 66; side; if *PL*, 62

10 thing. If] 65, 66; thing; if *PL*, 62

13 neutral being] 62-66; foreigner *PL*

16 which] 65, 66; that *PL*, 62

17 who] 65, 66; that *PL*, 62

19 ran mad] 65, 66; run mad *PL*, 62

21 water. When] 65, 66; water; when *PL*, 62

¹ Cf. 'On Deceit and Falshood' in the *Bee*: 'There is a famous way of trying witches, recommended by king *James I*. The old woman is tied hand and foot, and thrown into the river, and if she swims she is guilty, and taken out and burnt; but if she is innocent, she sinks, and is *only* drowned' (above, I, p. 497).

² See, for example, the *London Chronicle* for 31 July-2 August 1760: 'Last week three people were bit in Cannon-street, and one in Lothbury, by a mad dog. And on Monday last a little girl who had been bit, was bled to death by her friends.—A man, we hear, has also been smothered. There is scarce a day passes, but we hear of some melancholy accident of this sort. By accounts from the several bathing places along our coasts, there have been more persons dipped on this account this summer, than has been known for any five years preceding.'

died from a bite he had received some years before.¹ This relation only prepares the way for another, still more hideous, as how the master of a family, with seven small children, were all bit by a mad lap dog, and how the poor father first perceived the infection by
 5 calling for a draught of water, where he saw the lap dog swimming in the cup.

When epidemic terror is thus once excited, every morning comes loaded with some new disaster; as in stories of ghosts each loves to hear the account, though it only serves to make him uneasy, so here
 10 each listens with eagerness, and adds to the tidings with new circumstances of peculiar horror. A lady for instance, in the country, of very weak nerves has been frightened by the barking of a dog; and this alas too frequently happens. The story soon is improved and spreads that a mad dog had frightened a lady of distinction. These circum-
 15 stances begin to grow terrible before they have reached the neighbouring village, and there the report is, that a lady of quality was *bit* by a mad mastiff. This account every moment gathers new strength and grows more dismal as it approaches the capital, and by the time it has arrived in town the lady is described, with wild eyes, and
 20 foaming mouth, running mad upon all four, barking like a dog, biting her servants, and at last smothered between two beds by the advice of her doctors: while the mad mastiff is in the mean time ranging the whole country over, slaving at the mouth, and seeking whom he may devour.

25 My landlady, a good-natured woman, but a little credulous, waked me some mornings ago before the usual hour, with horror and astonishment in her looks. She desired me if I had any regard for my safety, to keep within; for a few days ago so dismal an accident had happened, as to put all the world upon their guard. A mad dog down
 30 in the country, she assured me, had bit a farmer, who soon becoming mad ran into his own yard, and bit a fine brindled cow; the cow

8 disaster;] 62-66; disaster, *PL*

9 uneasy;] 62; uneasy; *PL*, 65, 66

19-20 and foaming] *PL*; foaming 62-66

27 looks. She] 65; looks, she *PL*; looks; she 62; look. She 66

¹ Cf. the *Daily Advertiser* for 21 August 1760: 'We hear from Bradford, that on Tuesday se'nnight, after two Days Illness, died in the utmost Agonies, of a supposed Madness, a Shoemaker of that Place; which, by the convincing Symptoms of the Hydrophobia . . . , was occasioned by a Bite which he received from a mad Dog in his right Hand, and for which he was ineffectually dipt in the Salt-Water above a Twelvemonth ago.'

quickly became as mad as the man, began to foam at the mouth, and raising herself up, walked about on her hind legs, sometimes barking like a dog, and sometimes attempting to talk like the farmer. Upon examining the grounds of this story, I found my landlady had it from one neighbour, who had it from another neighbour, who heard 5 it from very good authority.

Were most stories of this nature well examined, it would be found that numbers of such as have been said to suffer were no way injured, and that of those who have been actually bitten, not one in a hundred was bit by a mad dog. Such accounts in general therefore only serve 10 to make the people miserable by false terrors, and sometimes fright the patient into actual phrenzy, by creating those very symptoms they pretend to deplore.

But even allowing three or four to die in a season of this terrible death (and four is probably too large a concession) yet still it is not 15 considered, how many are preserved in their health and in their property by this devoted animal's services. The midnight robber is kept at a distance; the insidious thief is often detected, the healthful chace repairs many a worn constitution, and the poor man finds in his dog a willing assistant, eager to lessen his toil, and content with 20 the smallest retribution.

A dog, says one of the English poets, "is an honest creature, and I am a friend to dogs."¹ Of all the beasts that graze the lawn or hunt the forest, a dog is the only animal, that leaving his fellows, attempts to cultivate the friendship of man; to man he looks in all his necessities with a speaking eye for assistance; exerts for him all the little 25 service in his power with cheerfulness and pleasure; for him bears famine and fatigue with patience and resignation; no injuries can abate his fidelity, no distress induce him to forsake his benefactor,

2 walked] 62-66; went *PL*

4 examining] 62-66; examining into *PL*

7 well] 65, 66; thoroughly *PL*, 62

9 a hundred] 62-66; the hundred *PL*

13 pretend] *PL*; pretended 62-66

16 and in] 62-66; and *PL*

¹ Thomas Otway's *Venice Preserved*, II. ii:

'Pierre. . . . Speak, who goes there?

Jaffier. A Dog that comes to howl

At yonder Moon: What's he that asks the Question?

Pier. A Friend to Dogs, for they are honest Creatures,

And ne'er betray their Masters; never Fawn

On any that they love not. . . .'

studious to please, and fearing to offend, he is still an humble steadfast dependant, and in him alone fawning is not flattery. How unkind then to torture this faithful creature who has left the forest, to claim the protection of man; how ungrateful a return to the trusty animal
 5 for all its services. Adieu.

LETTER LXX.¹

[Fortune proved not to be blind. The story of the avaricious miller.]

From Lien Chi Altangi to Hingpo, by the way of Moscow.

10 **T**HE Europeans are themselves blind, who describe fortune without sight. No first-rate beauty ever had finer eyes, or saw more clearly; they who have no other trade but seeking their fortune, need never hope to find her; coquet like she flies from her close pursuers, and at last fixes on the plodding mechanic, who stays at home, and minds his business.

15 I am amazed, how men can call her blind, when by the company she keeps she seems so very discerning. Wherever you see a gaming table, be very sure fortune is not there, wherever you see an house with the doors open, be very sure fortune is not there, when you see a man whose pocket-holes are laced with gold, be satisfied fortune
 20 is not there, wherever you see a beautiful woman good natured and obliging, be convinced fortune is never there. In short she is ever seen accompanying industry, and as often trundling a wheel-barrow, as lolling in a coach and six.

If you would make fortune your friend, or to personize her no
 25 longer, if you desire, my son, to be rich and have money, be more eager to save than to acquire: When people say *money is to be got here, and money is to be got there*, take no notice, mind your own business, stay where you are, and secure all you can get, without stirring. When you hear that your neighbour has picked up a purse of gold
 30 in the street, never run out into the same street, looking about you,

4 man; how] *PL*, 62; man! How 65, 66

4-5 the trusty . . . its services] 62-66; an animal that so truly loves him *PL*

5 Adieu.] *PL*, 62; *om.* 65, 66

9 THE Europeans . . . who describe] 62; THEY were themselves blind, my son, who have described *PL*

10 finer] 62; a finer pair of *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Monday, 1 September 1760.

in order to pick up such another, or when you are informed that he has made a fortune in one branch of business, never change your own in order to be his rival. Don't desire to be rich all at once, but patiently add farthing to farthing. Perhaps you despise the petty sum; and yet they who want a farthing, and have no friend that will lend them it, think farthings very good things. *Whang*, the foolish miller, when he wanted a farthing in his distress, found that no friend would lend, because they knew he wanted. Did you ever read the story of *Whang* in our books of Chinese learning, he, who despising small sums, and grasping at all, lost even what he had? 5 10

Whang, the miller, was naturally avaricious, nobody loved money better than he; or more respected those, that had it. When people would talk of a rich man in company, *Whang* would say, I know him very well, he and I have been long acquainted, he and I are intimate; he stood for a child of mine; but if ever a poor man was mentioned, he had not the least knowledge of the man, he might be very well for ought he knew, but he was not fond of many acquaintances, and loved to chuse his company. 15

Whang however, with all his eagerness for riches, was in reality poor, he had nothing but the profits of his mill to support him, but though these were small they were certain; while his mill stood and went, he was sure of eating, and his frugality was such, that he every day laid some money by, which he would at intervals count and contemplate with much satisfaction. Yet still his acquisitions were not equal to his desires, he only found himself above want, whereas he desired to be possessed of affluence. 20 25

One day as he was indulging these wishes, he was informed, that a neighbour of his had found a pan of money under ground, having dreamed of it three nights running before. These tidings were daggers to the heart of poor *Whang*. Here am I, says he, toiling and moiling from morning till night for a few paltry farthings, while neighbour *Hunks* only goes quietly to bed, and dreams himself into thousands before morning. O that I could dream like him, with 30

3 Don't] *PL*; Do not 62

9-10 he, who . . . at all,] 62; who despised small sums, and who grasping at all, he *PL*

10 had?] 62; had? If not permit me to relate it. *PL*

12 it. When] 62; it; when *PL*

14 he and I are intimate;] 62; *om. PL*

17-18 acquaintances, and . . . his company] 62; acquaintances *PL*

21-22 and went] 62; *om. PL*

30-31 and moiling] 62; *om. PL*

what pleasure would I dig round the pan; how sllily would I carry it home; not even my wife should see me; and then, O the pleasure of thrusting ones hand into a heap of gold up to the elbow!

Such reflections only served to make the miller unhappy; he discontinued his former assiduity, he was quite disgusted with small gains, and his customers began to forsake him. Every day he repeated the wish, and every night laid himself down in order to dream. Fortune, that was for a long time unkind, at last however seemed to smile upon his distresses, and indulged him with the wished for vision. He dreamed, that under a certain part of the foundation of his mill, there was concealed a monstrous pan of gold and diamonds, buried deep in the ground, and covered with a large flat stone. He rose up, thanked the stars, that were at last pleased to take pity on his sufferings, and concealed his good luck from every person, as is usual in money dreams, in order to have the vision repeated the two succeeding nights, by which he should be certain of its veracity. His wishes in this also were answered, he still dreamed of the same pan of money, in the very same place.

Now, therefore, it was past a doubt, so getting up early the third morning, he repairs alone, with a mattock in his hand, to the mill, and began to undermine that part of the wall which the vision directed. The first omen of success that he met was a broken mug; digging still deeper, he turns up an house tile, quite new and entire. At last, after much digging, he came to the broad flat stone, but then so large, that it was beyond one man's strength to remove it. Here, cried he, in raptures to himself, here it is; under this stone there is room for a very large pan of diamonds indeed. I must e'en go home to my wife, and tell her the whole affair, and get her to assist me in turning it up. Away therefore he goes, and acquaints his wife with every circumstance of their good fortune. Her raptures on this occasion, easily may be imagined, she flew round his neck, and embraced him in an agony of joy, but those transports however did not delay their eagerness to know the exact sum; returning therefore speedily together to the place where *Whang* had been digging; there they

2 not] 62; so that not *PL* me; and then,] 62; me. *PL*

8 however] 62; *om. PL*

14 and concealed] 62; but concealed *PL*

22 directed. The] 62; directed; the *PL*

23 an] *PL*; a 62

27 of diamonds] 62; *om. PL*

33 their eagerness] 62; the eagerness of each *PL*

found---not indeed the expected treasure, but the mill, their only support, undermined, and fallen. Adieu.

LETTER LXXI.¹

[The shabby beau, the man in black, the Chinese philosopher, &c. at Vaux-hall.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China. 5

THE People of *London* are as fond of walking as our friends at *Pekin* of riding; one of the principal entertainments of the citizens here in summer is to repair about nightfall to a garden not far from town,² where they walk about, shew their best cloaths and best faces, and listen to a concert provided for the occasion. 10

I accepted an invitation a few evenings ago from my old friend, the man in black, to be one of a party that was to sup there, and at the appointed hour waited upon him at his lodgings. There I found the company assembled and expecting my arrival. Our party consisted of my friend in superlative finery, his stockings rolled, a black velvet waistcoat which was formerly new, and his grey wig combed down in imitation of hair. A pawn-broker's widow, of whom, by the bye, my friend was a professed admirer, dressed out in green damask with three gold rings on every finger. Mr. *Tibbs* the second rate beau, I have formerly described, together with his lady, in flimsy silk, dirty gauze instead of linen, and an hat as big as an umbrello. 15 20

Our first difficulty was in settling how we should set out. Mrs. *Tibbs*

2 fallen] 62; fallen to the ground *PL*

12 accepted] 62; accepted of *PL*

13 was] 62; were *PL*

14 lodgings. There] 62; lodgings, where *PL*

15 assembled] 62; met *PL*

16 a] 62; his *PL*

17 which was formerly new] 62; appeared not much worse for wearing *PL*
combed] 62; was combed *PL*

18 A] 62; Besides him a *PL*

19 my friend] 62; he *PL* green damask] 62; a green damask gown *PL*

21 flimsy] 62; a flimsy *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 2 September 1760.

² There is a good description of Vauxhall Gardens written a few years later than Goldsmith's letter in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for August 1765 (xxxv. 353-6). For a more detailed account see James Granville Southworth, *Vauxhall Gardens* (New York, 1941).

had a natural aversion to the water,¹ and the widow being a little in flesh, as warmly protested against walking, a coach was therefore agreed upon; which being too small to carry five, Mr. *Tibbs* consented to sit in his wife's lap.

5 In this manner therefore we set forward, being entertained by the way with the bodings of Mr. *Tibbs*, who assured us, he did not expect to see a single creature for the evening above the degree of a cheesemonger; that this was the last night of the gardens,² and that consequently we should be pestered with the nobility and gentry
10 from *Thames-street* and *Crooked-lane*, with several other prophetic ejaculations, probably inspired by the uneasiness of his situation.

The illuminations began before we arrived, and I must confess, that upon entering the gardens, I found every sense overpaid with more than expected pleasure; the lights every where glimmering
15 through the scarcely moving trees; the full-bodied consort bursting on the stillness of the night; the natural consort of the birds, in the more retired part of the grove, vying with that which was formed by art; the company gayly dressed looking satisfaction; and the tables spread with various delicacies, all conspired to fill my imagination
20 with the visionary happiness of the *Arabian* lawgiver, and lifted me into an extasy of admiration. Head of *Confucius*, cried I to my friend, this is fine! this unites rural beauty with courtly magnificence, if we except the virgins of immortality that hang on every tree, and may be plucked at every desire, I don't see how this falls short of
25 *Mahomet's Paradise!* As for virgins, cries my friend, it is true, they are a fruit that don't much abound in our gardens here; but if ladies

1 the water] 62; water *PL*

4 consented to sit] 62; contented himself with sitting *PL*

10-11 prophetic ejaculations] 62; melancholy bodings *PL*

12 began] 62; were begun *PL*

16-18 the natural . . . by art:] 62; *om. PL*

18 looking] 62; and looking *PL* and] 62; *om. PL*

19 delicacies] 62; delicacy *PL*

20-21 lawgiver, and . . . of admiration] 62; lawgiver *PL*

22 this is] 62; but this is *PL*

24 this] 62; it *PL*

26 here] 62; about *London PL*

¹ Since the gardens were on the south side of the Thames, the usual approach was by water. There is an account of crossing over from Temple Stairs in the *Spectator*, No. 383.

² See the *Public Advertiser* for Saturday, 23 August 1760: 'Thursday Night the Entertainments at Vauxhall ended, where the fine Evening, &c. had collected together above 4000 Persons.'

as plenty as apples in autumn, and as complying as any *houry* of them all can content you, I fancy we have no need to go to heaven for Paradise.

I was going to second his remarks when we were called to a consultation by Mr. Tibbs and the rest of our company, to know in what manner we were to lay out the evening to the greatest advantage. Mrs. Tibbs was for keeping the genteel walk of the garden, where she observed there was always the very best company; the widow, on the contrary, (who came but once a season) was for securing a good standing place to see the water-works,¹ which she assured us would begin in less than an hour at farthest; a dispute therefore began, and as it was managed between two of very opposite characters, it threatened to grow more bitter at every reply. Mrs. Tibbs wondered how people could pretend to know the polite world who had received all their rudiments of breeding behind a compter; to which the other replied, that tho' some people sat behind compters, yet they could sit at the head of their own tables too, and carve three good dishes of hot meat whenever they thought proper, which was more than some people could say for themselves, that hardly knew a rabbit and onions from a green goose and gooseberries. It is hard to say where this might have ended, had not the husband, who probably knew the impetuosity of his wife's disposition, proposed to end the dispute by adjourning to a box, and try if there was any thing to be had for supper that was supportable. To this we all consented, but here a new distress arose, Mr. and Mrs. Tibbs would sit in none but a genteel box, a box where they might see and be seen, one, as they expressed it, in the very focus of public view; but such a box was not easy to be obtained, for tho' we were perfectly convinced of

2 we] 62; you *PL*

9 came] 62; came there *PL*

11 therefore] 62; now *PL*

13 it threatened] 62; threatened *PL*

20 It] *PL*; *par.* 62

¹ Reference is made to the waterworks in the *Connoisseur*, No. 68, for 15 May 1755: 'At *Vaux-Hall* . . . the cascade is made to spout with several additional streams of block-tin. . . .' And the following description appears in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1765 (xxxv. 354): 'A curious piece of machinery has of late years been exhibited, about nine o'clock, on the inside of one of the hedges, . . . representing a beautiful landscape in perspective, with a miller's house, a water-mill, and a cascade. The exact appearance of water is seen flowing down a declivity; and, turning the wheel of the mill, it rises up in a foam at the bottom, and then glides away.'

our own gentility, and the gentility of our appearance, yet we found it a difficult matter to persuade the keepers of the boxes to be of our opinion; they chose to reserve genteel boxes for what they judged more genteel company.

- 5 At last however we were fixed, tho' somewhat obscurely, and supplied with the usual entertainment of the place. The widow found the supper excellent, but Mrs. Tibbs thought every thing
 10 detestable: come, come, my dear, cries the husband, by way of consolation, to be sure we can't find such dressing here as we have at lord Crumps or lady Crimps; but for Vauxhall dressing it is pretty good, it is not their victuals indeed I find fault with, but their wine; their wine, cries he, drinking off a glass, indeed, is most abominable.¹

- By this last contradiction the widow was fairly conquered in point of politeness. She perceived now that she had no pretensions in the
 15 world to taste, her very senses were vulgar, since she had praised detestable custard, and smacked at wretched wine; she was therefore content to yield the victory, and for the rest of the night to listen and improve. It is true she would now and then forget herself and confess she was pleased, but they soon brought her back again to
 20 miserable refinement. She once praised the painting of the box in which we were sitting, but was soon convinced that such paltry pieces ought rather to excite horror than satisfaction; she ventured again to commend one of the singers, but Mrs. Tibbs soon let her know, in the style of a connoisseur, that the singer in question had
 25 neither ear, voice, nor judgment.

- Mr. Tibbs now willing to prove that his wife's pretensions to music were just, entreated her to favour the company with a song; but to this she gave a positive denial, for you know very well, my dear, says she, that I am not in voice to day, and when ones voice
 30 is not equal to ones judgment, what signifies singing; besides as there is no accompaniment, it would be but spoiling music. All these

2 the boxes] 62; the boxes, who are a kind of masters here, *PL*

3 judged] 62; judged to be *PL*

12 indeed, is most abominable] 62; is most abominable indeed *PL*

13 contradiction] 62; stroke *PL*

26 now] 62; was now *PL*

27 entreated] 62; and entreated *PL*

¹ An amusing account of the food and wine at Vauxhall is given in the number of the *Connoisseur* cited in the last note.

excuses however were overruled by the rest of the company who, though one would think they already had music enough, joined in the entreaty. But particularly the widow, now willing to convince the company of her breeding, pressed so warmly that she seem'd determined to take no refusal. At last then the lady complied, and after humming for some minutes, began with such a voice and such affectation, as I could perceive gave but little satisfaction to any except her husband. He sate with rapture in his eye, and beat time with his hand on the table.

You must observe, my friend, that it is the custom of this country, when a lady or gentleman happens to sing, for the company to sit as mute and motionless as statues. Every feature, every limb must seem to correspond in fixed attention, and while the song continues, they are to remain in a state of universal petrification. In this mortifying situation we had continued for some time, listening to the song, and looking with tranquility, when the master of the box came to inform us that the water-works were going to begin. At this information I could instantly perceive the widow bounce from her seat; but correcting herself, she sat down again, repressed by motives of good breeding. Mrs. Tibbs, who had seen the water-works an hundred times, resolving not to be interrupted, continued her song without any share of mercy, nor had the smallest pity on our impatience. The widow's face, I own, gave me high entertainment; in it I could plainly read the struggle she felt between good breeding and curiosity; she had talked of the water-works the whole evening before, and seemed to have come merely in order to see them, but then she could not bounce out in the very middle of a song, for that would be forfeiting all pretensions to high life, or high-lived company ever after: Mrs. Tibbs therefore kept on singing, and we

1-2 who, though . . . music enough,] 62; who *PL*

3 entreaty. But] 62; entreaty, but *PL*

6 after humming for some minutes,] 62; *om. PL*

8 husband. He] 62; husband, who *PL* beat] 62; beating *PL*

11 sing, for the company] 62; sing in company, *PL*

12 statues] 62; a statue *PL*

13 they] 62; the whole audience *PL*

15-16 listening to . . . with tranquility,] 62; *om. PL*

17 At this information] 62; *om. PL*

18-19 correcting] 62; instantly correct *PL*

19 she sat] 62; and sit *PL*

21 resolving] 62; was resolved *PL* any] 62; the smallest *PL*

22 nor had . . . our impatience] 62; and kept us all prisoners of complaisance *PL*

29-1 (p. 298) Mrs. Tibbs . . . at last] 62; at last, therefore *PL*

continued to listen, till at last, when the song was just concluded, the waiter came to inform us that the water-works were over.

The water-works over, cried the widow! the water-works over already, that's impossible, they can't be over so soon! It is not my
 5 business, replied the fellow, to contradict your ladyship, I'll run again and see; he went, and soon returned with a confirmation of the dismal tidings. No ceremony could now bind my friend's disappointed mistress, she testified her displeasure in the openest manner; in short, she now began to find fault in turn, and at last
 10 insisted upon going home, just at the time that Mr. and Mrs. Tibbs assured the company, that the polite hours were going to begin, and that the ladies would instantaneously be entertained with the horns.
 Adieu.

LETTER LXXII.¹

15 [The marriage act censured.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

NOT far from this city lives a poor tinker, who has educated
 20 seven sons, all at this very time in arms and fighting for their country, and what reward do you think has the tinker from the state for such important services? None in the world; his sons, when the war is over, may probably be whipt from parish to parish as vagabonds, and the old man, when past labour, may die a prisoner in some house of correction.

25 Such a worthy subject in China would be held in universal reverence; his services would be rewarded, if not with dignities, at least with an exemption from labour; he would take the left hand at feasts, and mandarines themselves would be proud to shew their submission. The *English* laws punish vice, the *Chinese* laws do more,
 30 they reward virtue!²

3-4 the water-works over already,] 62; om. PL

5 I'll] 62; but I'll PL

10 time that] 62; time PL

11-12 assured the . . . the horns] 62; were growing into spirits, and beginning to shew away PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Wednesday, 10 September 1760.

² From Voltaire's *Essai sur les mœurs*, chap. i: 'Dans les autres pays les lois punissent

Considering the little encouragement given to matrimony here, I am not surprized at the discouragements given to propagation. Would you believe it, my dear *Fum Hoam*, there are laws made, which even forbid the peoples marrying each other. By the head of *Confucius* I jest not; there are such laws in being here; and yet their law-givers have neither been instructed among the *Hottentots*, nor imbibed their principles of equity from the natives of *Anamaboo*.¹

There are laws which ordain, that no man shall marry a woman against her own consent. This, though contrary to what we are taught in *Asia*, and though in some measure a clog upon matrimony, I have no great objection to. There are laws which ordain, that no woman shall marry against her father and mother's consent, unless arrived at an age of maturity; by which is understood those years, when women with us are generally past child-bearing. This must be a clog upon matrimony, as it is more difficult for the lover to please three than one, and much more difficult to please old people than young ones. The laws ordain, that the consenting couple shall take a long time to consider before they marry, this is a very great clog, because people love to have all rash actions done in an hurry. It is ordained, that all marriages shall be proclaimed before celebration; this is a severe clog, as many are ashamed to have their marriage made public, from motives of vicious modesty, and many afraid from views of temporal interest. It is ordained, that there is nothing sacred in the ceremony, but that it may be dissolved to all intents and purposes by the authority of any civil magistrate. And yet opposite to this it is ordained, that the priest shall be paid a large sum of money for granting his sacred permission.²

2 not surprized . . . to propagation] 62; surprized how this country is even so populous as it seems to be *PL*

19 an] *PL*; a 62

le crime; à la Chine elles font plus, elles récompensent la vertu' (*Œuvres complètes*, ed. Moland, xi [1878], 175).

¹ Emanuel Bowen describes Anamaboe in Guinea as an important town in the Royal African Company's slave trade (*A Complete System of Geography* [1747], ii. 474).

² In this paragraph Goldsmith gives an exaggerated statement of some of the provisions of 'An act for the better preventing clandestine marriages' of 1753 (26 Geo. II, c. 33). The first 'clog upon matrimony'—that 'no man shall marry a woman against her own consent'—apparently refers to the provisions that 'in no case whatsoever, shall any suit or proceeding be had in any ecclesiastical court, in order to compel a celebration of any marriage *in facie ecclesiæ*, by reason of any contract of marriage whatsoever'. The second clog is the provision that a person 'under the age of twenty one years' must

Thus you see, my friend, that matrimony here is hedged round with so many obstructions, that those who are willing to break through or surmount them, must be contented, if at last they find it a bed of thorns. The laws are not to blame, for they have deterred
 5 the people from engaging as much as they could. It is indeed become a very serious affair in *England*, and none but serious people are generally found willing to engage. The young, the gay, and the beautiful who have motives of passion only to induce them, are seldom found to embark, as those inducements are taken away, and
 10 none but the old, the ugly, and the mercenary are seen to unite, who, if they have any posterity at all, will probably be an ill-favoured race like themselves.

What gave rise to those laws might have been some such accidents as these. It sometimes happened, that a miser who had spent all his
 15 youth, in scraping up money to give his daughter such a fortune as might get her a mandarin husband, found his expectations disappointed at last, by her running away with his footman: this must have been a sad shock to the poor disconsolate parent, to see his poor daughter in a one horse chaise, when he had designed her for a
 20 coach and six, what a stroke from providence! to see his dear money, go to enrich a beggar, all nature cried out at the profanation!

It sometimes happened also, that a lady who had inherited all the titles, and all the nervous complaints of nobility, thought fit to impair her dignity and mend her constitution, by marrying a farmer; this

2 so many obstructions,] 62; many an obstruction, so *PL*

3 or surmount them] 62; and surmount every difficulty *PL*

4-5 deterred the people] 62; debarred them *PL*

8-9 are seldom found to] 62; seldom *PL*

11-12 an ill-favoured race like] 62; as ill favoured as *PL*

20 dear] 62; dear, dear *PL*

have the consent of the father or guardian. The third and fourth clogs, concerning delay and public proclamation, refer to the provision that 'banns of matrimony shall be published in an audible manner in the parish church . . . upon three *Sundays* preceding the solemnization of marriage'. The fifth clog—that marriage 'may be dissolved to all intents and purposes by the authority of any civil magistrate'—refers to the provision that a marriage performed in violation of the statute 'shall be null and void to all intents and purposes whatsoever'. The last clog may be intended to suggest the provision concerning special licences, though nothing is said in the statute concerning the cost of such licences. There was apparently some opposition to the act at the time Goldsmith wrote; see the *Public Ledger* for 8 August 1760: 'It is expected there will be an alteration in the Marriage act, next sessions of parliament, it being imagined that clandestine marriages may be easily prevented, without laying marriage under the present restrictions; besides, it is evident, that the parties going to Scotland or Holland evade the present act.'

must have been a sad shock to her inconsolable relations, to see so fine a flower snatched from a flourishing family and planted in a dunghil, this was an absolute inversion of the first principles of things.

In order therefore to prevent the great from being thus contaminated by vulgar alliances, the obstacles to matrimony have been so contrived, that the rich only can marry among the rich, and the poor, who would leave celibacy, must be content to encrease their poverty with a wife. Thus have their laws fairly inverted the inducements to matrimony; nature tells us, that beauty is the proper allure-
ment to those who are rich, and money to those who are poor; but things here are so contrived, that the rich are invited to marry by that fortune which they do not want, and the poor have no inducement, but that beauty which they do not feel.

An equal diffusion of riches through any country ever constitutes its happiness. Great wealth in the possession of one stagnates, and extreme poverty with another keeps him in unambitious indigence; but the moderately rich are generally active, not too far removed from poverty to fear its calamities, nor too near extreme wealth to slacken the nerve of labour, they remain still between both in a state of continual fluctuation. How impolitic therefore are those laws which promote the accumulation of wealth among the rich, more impolitic still in attempting to increase the depression on poverty.

Bacon the English philosopher, compares money to manure, if gathered in heaps, says he, it does no good: on the contrary, it becomes offensive. But being spread, though never so thinly, over the surface of the earth, it enriches the whole country.¹ Thus the wealth a nation possesses must expatiate, or it is of no benefit to the public; it becomes rather a grievance, where matrimonial laws thus confine it to a few.

3 principles] 62; principle *PL*

5 thus] 62; *om. PL*

8-9 encrease their poverty with] 62; take up with poverty as well as *PL*

11 allurements to] *PL*; allurements of 62 money to] *PL*; money of 62

13 no] 62; no other *PL*

22 among the rich] 62; *om. PL*

23 on] 62; of *PL*

24-30 Bacon the . . . a few.] 62; *om. PL*

¹ See Bacon's essay 'Of Seditions and Troubles': 'Above all things, good policy is to be used, that the treasure and moneys in a state be not gathered into few hands; for, otherwise, a state may have a great stock, and yet starve. And money is like muck, not good except it be spread.'

But this restraint upon matrimonial community, even considered in a physical light is injurious. As those who rear up animals take all possible pains to cross the strain in order to improve the breed; so in those countries, where marriage is most free, the inhabitants are
 5 found every age to improve in stature and in beauty; on the contrary where it is confined to a *cast*, a *tribe*, or an *hord*, as among the Gaurs, the Jews, or the Tartars, each division soon assumes a family likeness, and every tribe degenerates into peculiar deformity. From hence it may be easily inferred, that if the mandarines here are re-
 10 solved only to marry among each other, they will soon produce a posterity with mandarine faces; and we shall see the heir of some honourable family scarce equal to the abortion of a country farmer.

These are a few of the obstacles to marriage here, and it is certain they have in some measure answered the end, for celibacy is both
 15 frequent and fashionable. Old batchelors appear abroad without a mask, and old maids, my dear Fum Hoam, have been absolutely known to ogle. To confess in friendship; if I were an Englishman, I fancy I should be an old batchelor myself; I should never find courage to run through all the adventures prescribed by the law. I
 20 could submit to court my mistress herself upon reasonable terms, but to court her father, her mother, and a long tribe of cousins, aunts and relations, and then stand the butt of a whole country church: I would as soon turn tail and make love to her grandmother.

I can conceive no other reason for thus loading matrimony, with
 25 so many prohibitions, unless it be that the country was thought already too populous, and this was found to be the most effectual means of thinning it. If this was the motive, I cannot but congratulate the wise projectors on the success of their scheme. Hail, O ye dim-sighted politicians, ye weeders of men! 'Tis yours to clip the
 30 wing of industry, and convert Hymen to a broker. 'Tis yours to behold small objects with a microscopic eye, but to be blind to those which require an extent of vision. 'Tis yours, O ye discerners of mankind, to lay the line between society, and weaken that force by

1 But this] 62; This PL

2 injurious] 62; injurious to society PL

3 possible pains] 62; pains possible PL breed; so] 62; breed. So PL

5 in beauty] 62; beauty PL

11 and we] 62; we PL

17 known to ogle] 62; seen to smile PL

22-23 relations, and . . . country church] 62; relations PL

23 her] 62; my PL

30 convert] 62; turn PL

dividing, which should bind with united vigour. 'Tis yours, to introduce national real distress, in order to avoid the imaginary distresses of a few. Your actions can be justified by an hundred reasons like truth, they can be opposed by but a few reasons, and those reasons are true. Farewel. 5

LETTER LXXIII.¹

[Life endear'd by age.]

From Lien Chi Altangi to Hingpo, by the way of Moscow.

AGE that lessens the enjoyment of life encreases our desire of 10
living. Those dangers which in the vigour of youth we had
learned to despise, assume new terrors as we grow old. Our caution
encreasing as our years encrease, fear becomes at last the prevailing
passion of the mind, and the small remainder of life is taken up
in useless efforts to keep off our end, or provide for a continued
existence. 15

Strange contradiction in our nature, and to which even the wise
are liable! if I should judge of that part of life which lies before me
by that which I have already seen, the prospect is hideous. Experi-
ence tells me, that my past enjoyments have brought no real felicity,
and sensation assures me, that those I have felt are stronger than 20
those which are yet to come. Yet experience and sensation in vain
persuade, hope more powerful than either, dresses out the distant
prospect in fancied beauty, some happiness in long perspective still
beckons me to pursue, and like a losing gamester, every new dis-
appointment encreases my ardour to continue the game.² 25

1 bind] 62; flow PL

2 real] 62; om. PL

6-8 LETTER LXXIII . . . of Moscow.] ESSAY XIV. 65, 66

8 *Hingpo, by the way of Moscow.*] PL, 62; *Fum Hoam, first President of the Cerimonial Academy, at Pekin in China.* Dobson, who notes, 'This was originally inaccurately addressed to Hingpo.' The writer does address 'my friend' and speaks of 'us who are declined in years'; but these expressions are ambiguous. The advice contained in the letter is probably more pertinent for a young man than an old one, and the tone resembles that of letters to Hingpo and is quite unlike that of letters to Fum Hoam.

9 enjoyment] 62-66; enjoyments PL

23-24 some happiness . . . to pursue,] 62-66; om. PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 12 September 1760.

² For earlier uses of the figure of a losing gamester see the Index.

Whence my friend this encreased love of life which grows upon us with our years; whence comes it, that we thus make greater efforts to preserve our existence, at a period when it becomes scarce worth the keeping! Is it that nature attentive to the preservation of mankind encreases our wishes to live, while she lessens our enjoyments; and as she robs the senses of every pleasure, equips imagination in the spoils? Life would be insupportable to an old man, who loaded with infirmities, feared death no more than when in the vigour of manhood; the numberless calamities of decaying nature, and the consciousness of surviving every pleasure, would at once induce him with his own hand to terminate the scene of misery; but happily the contempt of death forsakes him at a time when it could only be prejudicial; and life acquires an imaginary value in proportion, as its real value is no more.

Our attachment to every object around us encreases in general, from the length of our acquaintance with it. I would not chuse, says a *French* philosopher, to see an old post pulled up, with which I had been long acquainted.¹ A mind long habituated to a certain set of objects, insensibly becomes fond of seeing them; visits them from habit, and parts from them with reluctance; from hence proceeds the avarice of the old in every kind of possession. They love the world, and all that it produces; they love life and all its advantages, not because it gives them pleasure, but because they have known it long.

Chinvang the Chaste,² ascending the throne of China, commanded that all who were unjustly detained in prison during the preceding reigns, should be set free. Among the number who came to thank their deliverer on this occasion, there appeared a majestic old man, who, falling at the emperor's feet, addressed him as follows: "Great

¹ my friend] *PL*, 62; then is 65, 66

⁴ Is it that nature] 62-66; the final cause is obvious. Nature *PL*

⁷ spoils?] 66; spoil. *PL*; spoil? 62, 65

²⁰ proceeds] 65, 66; proceed *PL*, 62

²¹ avarice of the old in] 62-66; attachments of the old to *PL* possession. They] *PL*, 62; possession; they 65, 66

¹ Goldsmith had used this same quotation in his essay 'A Comparative View of Races and Nations' in the *Royal Magazine* for June 1760, where it is ascribed to 'the sensible Menage' (below, III, p. 67).

² Concerning Chin-ting-vang, twenty-seventh emperor of the third dynasty, Du Halde says, 'The Empress dying, he liv'd in Celibacy; . . . whence he was surnam'd the Chaste' (i. 165). The anecdote concerning him is not in Du Halde.

father of China behold a wretch now eighty-five years old, who was shut up in a dungeon at the age of twenty-two. I was imprisoned, tho' a stranger to crime, or without being even confronted by my accusers. I have now lived in solitude and darkness for more than fifty years, and am grown familiar with distress. As yet dazzled with the splendour of that sun to which you have restored me, I have been wandering the streets to find out some friend that would assist, or relieve, or remember me; but my friends, my family, and relations, are all dead, and I am forgotten. Permit me then, O Chinwang, to wear out the wretched remains of life in my former prison; the walls of my dungeon are to me more pleasing than the most splendid palace; I have not long to live, and shall be unhappy except I spend the rest of my days where my youth was passed, in that prison from whence you were pleased to release me."

The old man's passion for confinement is similar to that we all have for life. We are habituated to the prison, we look round with discontent, are displeased with the abode, and yet the length of our captivity only encreases our fondness for the cell. The trees we have planted, the houses we have built, or the posterity we have begotten, all serve to bind us closer to the earth, and embitter our parting. Life sues the young like a new acquaintance, the companion as yet unexhausted, is at once instructive and amusing, its company pleases, yet for all this it is but little regarded. To us who are declined in years life appears like an old friend; its jests have been anticipated in former conversation; it has no new story to make us smile, no new improvement with which to surprize, yet still we love it; destitute of every enjoyment still we love it, husband the waisting treasure with encreasing frugality, and feel all the poignancy of anguish in the fatal separation.

Sir Philip Mordaunt was young, beautiful, sincere, brave, an Englishman. He had a complete fortune of his own, and the love of the king his master, which was equivalent to riches. Life opened

7 out] 65, 66; *om. PL*, 62

7-8 assist, or relieve.] 62-66; assist *PL*

9 dead, and I am] 62-66; dead and *PL*

13 in that prison] 62-66; and *PL*

15-16 that we all have] 62-66; ours *PL*

20 the earth] 66; earth *PL*-65

22 its] 66; his *PL*; 'tis 62; it's 65

23 for all this it] 62-66; still he *PL*

27 enjoyment] 65, 66; agreement *PL*, 62

28 encreasing] 65, 66; encreased *PL*, 62

all her treasures before him, and promised a long succession of happiness. He came, tasted of the entertainment, but was disgusted even at the beginning. He professed an aversion to living, was tired of walking round the same circle, had tried every enjoyment, and
 5 found them all grow weaker at every repetition. If life be in youth so displeasing, cried he to himself, what will it appear when age comes on, if it be at present indifferent, sure it will then be execrable. This thought embittered every reflection, till at last with all the serenity of perverted reason, he ended the debate with a pistol! Had
 10 this self deluded man been apprized, that existence grows more desirable to us the longer we exist, he would have then faced old age without shrinking, he would have boldly dared to live, and served that society by his future assiduity, which he basely injured by his desertion. Adieu.

15

LETTER LXXIV.¹

[The description of a little great man.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

20 **I**N reading the news-papers here, I have reckoned up not less than twenty-five great men, seventeen very great men, and nine very extraordinary men in less than the compass of half a year. These, say the gazettes, are the men that posterity are to gaze at with admiration; these the names that fame will be employed in holding up for the astonishment of succeeding ages. Let me see,—
 25 forty-six great men in half a year, amounts just to ninety-two in a

1 treasures] 65, 66; treasure *PL*, 622 happiness] 66; future happiness *PL*-653 at] 65, 66; in *PL*, 624 had] 62-66; he *PL*5 them all] 62-66; it *PL* repetition. If] 62-66; repetition; if *PL*7-8 execrable. This] 62-66; execrable; this *PL*11 have then] 62-66; then have *PL*12 served] 62-66; would have served *PL*13 by his future assiduity,] 62-66; *om. PL* basely] 62-66; *om. PL*14 Adieu.] *PL*, 62; *om. 65*, 6619 here] 62; which are publish'd here every day *PL*22 the gazettes] 62; they *PL*¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Monday, 15 September 1760.

year.—I wonder how posterity will be able to remember them all, or whether the people in future times will have any other business to mind, but that of getting the catalogue by heart.

Does the mayor of a corporation make a speech? he is instantly set down for a great man. Does a pedant digest his common place-
book into a folio, he quickly becomes great. Does a poet string up
trite sentiments in rhyme, he also becomes the great man of the
hour. How diminutive soever the object of admiration, each is
followed by a crowd of still more diminutive admirers. The shout
begins in his train, onward he marches toward immortality, looks
back at the pursuing crowd with self-satisfaction; catching all the
oddities, the whimsies, the absurdities, and the littlenesses of con-
scious greatness, by the way.¹

I was yesterday invited by a gentleman to dinner, who promised
that our entertainment should consist of an haunch of venison, a
turtle, and a great man. I came, according to appointment. The
venison was fine, the turtle good, but the great man insupportable.
The moment I ventured to speak, I was at once contradicted with a
snap. I attempted by a second and a third assault to retrieve my lost
reputation, but was still beat back with confusion. I was resolved to
attack him once more from entrenchment, and turned the conversa-
tion upon the government of China, but even here he asserted,
snapped, and contradicted as before. Heavens, thought I, this man
pretends to know China even better than myself! I looked round to
see who was on my side, but every eye was fixed in admiration on
the great man; I therefore at last thought proper to sit silent, and act
the pretty gentleman during the ensuing conversation.²

6 great. Does] 62; great; does *PL*

10-11 looks back . . . self-satisfaction:] 62; *om. PL*

26 proper] 62; it best *PL*

27 during the ensuing conversation] 62; for the remaining part of the evening *PL*

¹ This paragraph closely resembles the penultimate paragraph of Goldsmith's essay 'On the Instability of Worldly Grandeur' in the *Bee*, No. VI (above, I, p. 472).

² This paragraph seems to have been modelled on a passage in Montesquieu's *Lettres persanes*, lettre 72: 'Je me trouvai l'autre jour dans une compagnie où je vis un homme bien content de lui. Dans un quart-d'heure, il décida trois questions de morale, quatre problèmes historiques et cinq points de physique. Je n'ai jamais vu un décisionnaire si universel: son esprit ne fut jamais suspendu par le moindre doute. On laissa les sciences; on parla des nouvelles du tems: il décida sur les nouvelles du tems. Je voulus l'attraper, et je dis en moi-même: "Il faut que je me mette dans mon fort; je vais me réfugier dans mon pays." Je lui parlai de la Perse. Mais, à peine lui eus-je dit quatre mots, qu'il me

When a man has once secured a circle of admirers, he may be as ridiculous here as he thinks proper, and it all passes for elevation of sentiment, or learned absence. If he transgresses the common forms of breeding, mistakes even a tea-pot for a tobacco-box, it is said,
 5 that his thoughts are fixed on more important objects; to speak and act like the rest of mankind is to be no greater than they. There is something of oddity in the very idea of greatness, for we are seldom astonished at a thing very much resembling ourselves.

When the Tartars make a Lama, their first care is to place him
 10 in a dark corner of the temple;¹ here he is to sit half concealed from view, to regulate the motion of his hands, lips and eyes, but above all he is enjoined gravity and silence. This however is but the prelude to his apotheosis; a set of emissaries are dispatched among the people to cry up his piety, gravity, and love of raw flesh; the people
 15 take them at their word, approach the Lama, now become an idol, with the most humble prostration; he receives their addresses without motion, commences a god, and is ever after fed by his priests with the spoon of immortality.² The same receipt in this country serves to make a great man. The idol only keeps close, sends out
 20 his little emissaries to be hearty in his praise, and straight, whether statesman or author, he is set down in the list of fame, continuing

3 absence. If] 62; absence; if *PL*

4 mistakes even] 62; or mistakes *PL*

11 regulate] 62; keep a strict watch, as to regulating *PL*

donna deux démentis, fondés sur l'autorité de MM. Tavernier et Chardin. "Ah! bon Dieu! dis-je en moi-même, quel homme est-ce là? Il connoitra tout à l'heure les rues d'Ispahan mieux que moi!" Mon parti fut bientôt pris: je me tus, je le laissai parler, et il décide encore.' See Sells, pp. 106-7, and Smith, pp. 50-51.

¹ Cf. Goldsmith's review of Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry* in the *Monthly Review* for May 1757 (from the summary of Burke): '... in Pagan worship, the idol is generally placed in the most obscure part of the temple; which is done with a view of heightening the awe of its adorers' (above, I, p. 31).

² On the lamas of Tartary see Le Comte, ii. 143-4: 'Depuis que les Tartares gouvernent la Chine, les *Lamas*, autre espece de Bonzes venus de Tartarie, s'y sont établis.... Ce sont les Prestres ordinaires des Seigneurs Tartares...; mais dans la Tartarie ils sont eux-mêmes les Dieux du peuple.

'C'est là qu'est le siege du celebre *Fo*, qui paroist sous une figure sensible, & qu'on dit ne mourir jamais. On le conserve dans un Temple; & une infinité de ces *Lamas* le servent avec une veneration infinie, qu'ils ont soin d'inspirer à tout le monde. On le montre rarement, & de si loin qu'il est difficile de le reconnoître. Quand il meurt en effet, car c'est un homme comme les autres, on substitué en sa place un Lama de mesme taille, & autant qu'il est possible de mesme air, afin que le peuple y soit plus aisément trompé.' See also Du Halde, ii. 279.

to be praised while it is fashionable to praise, or while he prudently keeps his minuteness concealed from the public.

I have visited many countries, and have been in cities without number, yet never did I enter a town which could not produce ten or twelve of those little great men; all fancying themselves known to the rest of the world, and complimenting each other upon their extensive reputation. It is amusing enough when two of those domestic prodigies of learning mount the stage of ceremony, and give and take praise from each other. I have been present when a German doctor for having pronounced a panegyric upon a certain monk, was thought the most ingenious man in the world; 'till the monk soon after divided this reputation by returning the compliment; by which means they both marched off with universal applause.¹

The same degree of undeserved adulation that attends our great man while living, often also follows him to the tomb. It frequently happens that one of his little admirers, sits down big with the important subject, and is delivered of the history of his life and writings. This may properly be called the revolutions of a life between the fire-side and the easy-chair.² In this we learn, the year in which he was born, at what an early age he gave symptoms of uncommon genius and application, together with some of his smart sayings,

2 the public] 62; public view *PL*

9 other.] 62; other; *PL*

12-14 compliment; by . . . universal applause] 62; compliment *PL*

¹ Cf. Goldsmith's review of Dunkin's *An Epistle to the . . . Earl of Chesterfield* in the *Critical Review* for March 1760: 'There is scarcely a trifling city or university in Europe which has not its great men; characters, who are taught by adulation, to fancy themselves figuring in the republic of letters, and leaving monuments of their merit to remote posterity. If there should happen to be two of this character in the same city, the compliments they mutually bestow on each other are pleasant enough: they attempt to raise each other's reputation by mutual flattery, and establish their little dominion within the circle of all their acquaintance' (above, I, p. 231). After this follows the story of the two Spaniards, Brandellius and Mogusius, who raised each other's reputation by panegyrics.

² Cf. Goldsmith's letter to Robert Bryanton dated 14 August 1758: 'Every day do I remember the calm anecdotes of your life, from the fire-side to the easy chair . . .' (*Collected Letters*, p. 37); the second paragraph of 'Memoirs of M. de Voltaire': 'Voltaire however, may be justly exempted from the number of those obscure philosophers whose days have been passed between the fire-side and the easy chair . . .' (below, Vol. III); and the remark on professors in the review of Formey's *Philosophical Miscellanies* in the *Critical Review* for June 1760: 'Though their whole lives may have passed away between the fire-side and the easy chair . . .' (above, I, p. 180).

collected by his aunt and mother while yet but a boy. The next book introduces him to the university, where we are informed of his amazing progress in learning, his excellent skill in darning stockings, and his new invention for papering books to save the covers. He next
 5 makes his appearance in the republic of letters, and publishes his folio. Now the colossus is reared, his works are eagerly bought up by all the purchasers of scarce books. The learned societies invite him to become a member; he disputes against some foreigner with a long Latin name, conquers in the controversy, is complimented by
 10 several authors of gravity and importance, is excessively fond of egg sauce with his pig; becomes president of a literary club, and dies in the meridian of his glory. Happy they, who thus have some little faithful attendant, who never forsakes them, but prepares to wrangle and to praise against every opposer; at once ready to encrease their
 15 pride while living, and their character when dead. For you and I, my friend, who have no humble admirer thus to attend us, we, who neither are, nor ever will be great men, and who do not much care whether we are great men or no, at least let us strive to be honest men, and to have common sense.

20

LETTER LXXV.¹

[The necessity of amusing each other with new books, insisted upon.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

25 **T**Here are numbers in this city who live by writing new books, and yet there are thousands of volumes in every large library unread and forgotten. This, upon my arrival, was one of those contradictions which I was unable to account for. Is it possible, said I, that there should be any demand for new books, before those already published are read? Can there be so many employed in producing

1 yet] 62; he was yet *PL*

6 folio. Now] 62; folio; now *PL*

13-14 to wrangle and] 62; *om. PL*

16 admirer] 62; admirers *PL*

19 sense.] 62; sense. Adieu. *PL*

25 library] 62; library here *PL*

a commodity with which the market is already overstocked; and with goods also better than any of modern manufacture.

What at first view appeared an inconsistency, is a proof at once of this people's wisdom and refinement. Even allowing the works of their ancestors better written than theirs, yet those of the moderns 5 acquire a real value, by being marked with the impression of the times. Antiquity has been in the possession of others, the present is our own; let us first therefore learn to know what belongs to ourselves, and then if we have leisure, cast our reflections back to the reign of *Shouou*, who governed twenty thousand years before the 10 creation of the moon.

The volumes of antiquity like medals, may very well serve to amuse the curious, but the works of the moderns, like the current coin of a kingdom, are much better for immediate use; the former are often prized above their intrinsic value, and kept with care, the 15 latter seldom pass for more than they are worth, and are often subject to the merciless hands of sweating critics, and clipping compilers;¹ the works of antiquity were ever praised, those of the moderns read, the treasures of our ancestors have our esteem, and we boast the passion, those of cotemporary genius engage our heart 20 altho' we blush to own it. The visits we pay the former resemble those we pay the great; the ceremony is troublesome, and yet such as we would not chuse to forego; our acquaintance with modern books, is like sitting with a friend; our pride is not flattered in the interview, but it gives more internal satisfaction. 25

In proportion as society refines, new books must ever become more necessary. Savage rusticity is reclaimed by oral admonition alone; but the elegant excesses of refinement are best corrected by the still voice of studious enquiry. In a polite age, almost every person becomes a reader, and receives more instruction from the 30 press than the pulpit. The preaching Bonse may instruct the illiterate peasant; but nothing less than the insinuating address of a fine writer can win its way to an heart already relaxed in all the

1-2 with goods also] 62; that with goods allowed to be *PL*

3 at first view appeared] 62; may at first view appear *PL*

8 therefore] 62; *om. PL*

10 *Shouou*] *PL*; *Shonou* 62

21-25 The visits . . . internal satisfaction.] 62; *om. PL*

33 already] 62; *om. PL*

¹ There is a play upon the words 'sweating' (lightening gold coins by wearing them away by friction or attrition) and 'clipping' (mutilating coins by paring the edges).

effeminacy of refinement.¹ Books are necessary to correct the vices of the polite, but those vices are ever changing, and the antidote should be changed accordingly; should still be new.²

- Instead therefore of thinking the number of new publications
 5 here too great, I could wish it still greater, as they are the most useful instruments of reformation. Every country must be instructed either by *writers* or *preachers*; but as the number of readers en-
 creases, the number of hearers is proportionably diminished, the writer becomes more useful, and the preaching Bonse less necessary.
 10 Instead, therefore, of complaining that writers are overpaid, when their works procure them a bare subsistence, I should imagine it the duty of a state not only to encourage their numbers, but their industry. A Bonse is rewarded with immense riches for instructing only a few, even of the most ignorant, of the people; and sure the
 15 poor scholar should not beg his bread, who is capable of instructing a million!

- Of all rewards, I grant, the most pleasing to a man of real merit, is fame; but a polite age, of all times, is that in which scarce any share of merit can acquire it.³ What numbers of fine writers in the
 20 latter empire of Rome, when refinement was carried to the highest pitch, have missed that fame and immortality which they had fondly arrogated to themselves? How many Greek authors, who wrote at that period when Constantinople was the refined mistress of the empire, now rest either not printed, or not read, in the libraries of
 25 Europe! Those who came first, while either state as yet was bar-

3 accordingly; should still be new] 62; accordingly *PL*

4 new publications] 62; books *PL*

5 they] 62; books *PL*

7-8 encreases] 62; encrease *PL*

8 hearers] 62; listeners *PL*

16 million] 62; nation *PL*

21-22 have missed . . . to themselves?] 62; are known to us only by name. *PL*

¹ Goldsmith develops this contrast between the uses of the preacher and the uses of the writer in the last paragraph of Letter LVII above.

² In the *Enquiry* Goldsmith had twice insisted on the need of new books to correct new vices and follies (above, I, pp. 314 and 324).

³ Cf. Hume's essay 'Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences': 'Next to emulation, the greatest encourager of the noble arts is praise and glory. A writer is animated with new force, when he hears the applauses of the world for his former productions. . . . But when the posts of honour are all occupied, his first attempts are but coldly received by the public; being compared to productions, which are both in themselves more excellent, and have already the advantage of an established reputation' (*Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects* [1758], p. 85).

barous, carried all the reputation away. Authors, as the age refined, became more numerous, and their numbers destroyed their fame.¹ It is but natural, therefore, for the writer, when conscious that his works will not procure him fame hereafter, to endeavour to make them turn out to his temporal interest here.

Whatever be the motives which induce men to write, whether avarice or fame, the country becomes most wise and happy, in which they most serve for instructors. The countries where sacerdotal instruction alone is permitted, remain in ignorance, superstition, and hopeless slavery. In England where there are as many new books published as in all the rest of Europe together, a spirit of freedom and reason reigns among the people; they have been often known to act like fools, they are generally found to think like men.

The only danger that attends a multiplicity of publications, is that some of them may be calculated to injure, rather than benefit society. But where writers are numerous, they also serve as a check upon each other, and perhaps a literary inquisition is the most terrible punishment that can be conceived, to a literary transgressor.

But to do the English justice, there are but few offenders of this kind, their publications in general aim at mending either the heart, or improving the common weal. The dullest writer talks of virtue, and liberty, and benevolence with esteem; tells his true story, filled with good and wholesome advice; warns against slavery, bribery, or the bite of a mad dog, and dresses up his little useful magazine of knowledge and entertainment, at least with a good intention. The dunces of France, on the other hand, who have less encouragement, are more vicious. Tender hearts, languishing eyes, Leonora in love at thirteen, ecstatic transports, stolen blisses, are the frivolous subjects of their frivolous memoirs. In England, if a bawdy blockhead

7 avarice] 62; of avarice *PL*

8-10 The countries . . . hopeless slavery.] 62; *om. PL*

10 where] 62; *om. PL*

11 together.] 62; together; hence *PL*

12 they have] 62; for the English, though they have *PL*

13 they are] 62; are *PL*

19-20 there are . . . this kind.] 62; *om. PL*

26 encouragement] 62; liberty *PL*

28-29 the frivolous . . . frivolous memoirs] 62; their frivolous subjects *PL*

¹ Cf. the *Enquiry*: 'It is indeed a misfortune for a fine writer to be born in a period so enlightened as ours. The harvest of wit is gathered in, and little is left for him, except to glean what others have thought unworthy their bringing away' (above, I, p. 300).

thus breaks in on the community, he sets his whole fraternity in a roar; nor can he escape, even though he should fly to nobility for shelter.

- Thus even dunces, my friend, may make themselves useful. But
 5 there are others whom nature has blest with talents above the rest of mankind; men capable of thinking with precision, and impressing their thought with rapidity. Beings who diffuse those regards upon mankind, which others contract and settle upon themselves. These deserve every honour from that community of which they are more
 10 peculiarly the children,¹ to such I would give my heart, since to them I am indebted for its humanity! Adieu.

LETTER LXXVI.²

[The preference of grace to beauty: An allegory.]

From Hingpo at Terki, to Lien Chi Altangi, by the way of Moscow.

- 15 **I** Still remain at *Terki*, where I have received that money which was remitted here in order to release me from captivity. My fair companion still improves in my esteem; the more I know her mind her beauty becomes more poignant; she appears charming, even among the daughters of *Circassia*.
 20 Yet were I to examine her beauty with the art of a statuary, I should find numbers here that far surpass her; nature has not granted her all the boasted *Circassian* regularity of feature, and yet she greatly exceeds the fairest of the country, in the art of seizing the affections.³ Whence, have I often said to myself, this resistless magic that attends
 25 even moderate charms: though I regard the beauties of the country, with admiration, every interview weakens the impression, but the form of *Zelis* grows upon my imagination, I never behold her without

¹ thus] 62; *om. PL* his whole] 62; the whole literary *PL*

⁴ Thus even] 62; Even *PL*

⁶ men] 62; *om. PL*

26-27 the form of *Zelis*] 62; her form *PL*

¹ Cf. the *Enquiry*: 'If the author be . . . still so necessary among us, let us treat him with proper consideration, as a child of the public, not a rent-charge on the community' (above, I, p. 315).

² In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 19 September 1760.

³ What follows in the letter was suggested by the second paper in Marivaux's *Le Cabinet du philosophe*, in *Le Spectateur françois, suivi du Cabinet du philosophe* (3^e éd.; Paris, 1761), ii. 219-30; and some passages in the letter are quite direct translations of the French. The more particular borrowings are noted below. This source was pointed out by Sells, p. 117.

an encrease of tenderness and respect. Whence this injustice of the mind in preferring imperfect beauty to that which nature seems to have finished with care? whence the infatuation, that he whom a comet could not amaze, should be astonished at a meteor! When reason was thus fatigued to find an answer, my imagination pursued 5 the subject, and this was the result.

I fancied myself placed between two landscapes, this called the *region of beauty*, and that *the valley of the graces*; the one adorned with all that luxuriant nature could bestow; the fruits of various climates adorned the trees, the grove resounded with music, the gale breathed 10 perfume, every charm that could arise from symmetry and exact distribution were here conspicuous, the whole offering a prospect of pleasure without end. *The valley of the graces* on the other hand, seemed by no means so inviting; the streams and the groves appeared just as they usually do in frequented countries; no magnificent par- 15 terres, no consort in the grove, the rivulet was edged with weeds, and the rook joined its voice to that of the nightingale. All was simplicity and nature.

The most striking objects ever first allure the traveller, I entered the region of beauty with encreased curiosity, and promised myself 20 endless satisfaction in being introduced to the presiding goddess. I perceived several strangers, who entered with the same design, and what surprized me not a little, was to see several others hastening to leave this abode of seeming felicity.¹

After some fatigue, I had at last the honour of being introduced 25 to the goddess, who represented beauty in person. She was seated on a throne, at the foot of which stood several strangers lately introduced like me; all regarding her form in extasy. *Ah, what eyes! what lips! how clear her complexion! how perfect her shape!* at these exclamations beauty with down-cast eyes, would endeavour to 30

4 astonished at] 62; struck with PL When] 62; par. PL

5 thus] 62; om. PL

5-6 pursued the . . . the result] 62; has often pursued the subject PL

7 I] 62; no par. PL

9 could] 62; had to PL

13 end. *The*] 62; end; such appeared the *region of beauty*; the PL

15 usually do in] 62; do in most PL

16 rivulet] 62; rivulets PL

17 its] 62; his PL All] 62; In short, all PL

24 abode] 62; place PL

counterfeit modesty, but soon again looking round as if to confirm every spectator in his favourable sentiments, sometimes she would attempt to allure us by smiles, and at intervals would bridle back, in order to inspire us with respect as well as tenderness.¹

- 5 This ceremony lasted for some time, and had so much employed our eyes, that we had forgot all this while that the goddess was silent. We soon however began to perceive the defect: *what*, said we, among each other, *are we to have nothing but languishing airs, soft looks, and inclinations of the head, will the goddess only deign to satisfy*
 10 *our eyes?* Upon this, one of the company stepped up to present her with some fruits he had gathered by the way. She received the present, most sweetly smiling, and with one of the whitest hands in the world, but still not a word escaped her lips.²

- I now found that my companions grew weary of their homage;
 15 they went off one by one, and resolving not to be left behind, I offered to go in my turn, when just at the door of the temple I was called back by a female, whose name was *Pride*, and who seemed displeased at the behaviour of the company. *Where are you hastening?* said she to me with an angry air, *the goddess of beauty is here*. I have
 20 been to visit her, Madam, replied I, and find her more beautiful even than report had made her. *And why then will you leave her?* added the female. I have seen her long enough, returned I; I have got all her features by heart. Her eyes are still the same. Her nose is a very fine one, but it is still just such a nose now as it was half an hour ago:
 25 could she throw a little more mind into her face, perhaps I should be for wishing to have more of her company. *What signifies*, replied my female, *whether she has a mind or not; has she any occasion for a mind, so formed as she is by nature. If she had a common face, indeed, there might be some reason for thinking to improve it; but when features are*
 30 *already perfect, every alteration would but impair them. A fine face is already at the point of perfection, and a fine lady should endeavour to*

1 looking] 62; looked PL

2 every spectator in his] 62; us in our PL sentiments, sometimes] 62; sentiments. Sometimes PL

5 for some time] 62; a quarter of an hour PL

7 silent. We] 62; silent, we PL

18 the company] 62; all the company PL

29 reason] 62; occasion PL

¹ This paragraph is an abridged translation of Marivaux, pp. 222-3.

² This paragraph is derived from *ibid.*, pp. 223-4.

*keep it so; the impression it would receive from thought, would but disturb its whole oeconomy.*¹

To this speech I gave no reply, but made the best of my way to the valley of the Graces. Here I found all those who before had been my companions in the region of beauty, now upon the same errand.² 5

As we entered the valley, the prospect insensibly seemed to improve; we found every thing so natural, so domestic, and pleasing, that our minds, which before were congealed in admiration, now relaxed into gaiety and good-humour. We had designed to pay our respects to the presiding goddess, but she was no where to be found. 10 One of our companions asserted, that her temple lay to the right; another, to the left; a third, insisted that it was strait before us; and a fourth, that we had left it behind. In short, we found every thing familiar and charming, but could not determine where to seek for the Grace in person. 15

In this agreeable incertitude we passed several hours, and though very desirous of finding the goddess, by no means impatient of the delay. Every part of the valley presented some minute beauty, which, without offering itself at once, stole within the soul, and captivated us with the charms of our retreat. Still, however, we continued to 20 search, and might still have continued, had we not been interrupted by a voice which, though we could not see from whence it came, addressed us in this manner:

"If you would find the goddess of Grace, seek her not under one form, for she assumes a thousand.³ Ever changing under the eye of 25 inspection, her variety, rather than her figure, is pleasing. In contemplating her beauty, the eye glides over every perfection with giddy delight, and, capable of fixing no where, is charmed with the whole.* She is now contemplation with solemn look, again

* Vultus nimium lubricus aspici. HOR.⁴

5 errand] 62; errand as myself PL

15 in person] 62; om. PL

22 from whence] 62; the person from whom PL

24 Grace] 62; the Graces PL

25-26 eye of inspection] 62; inspection of the observer PL

26-27 In contemplating her beauty, the] 62; The PL

27 perfection] 62; charm PL

¹ This paragraph is condensed from *ibid.*, pp. 224-6.

² This paragraph is from *ibid.*, pp. 226-7. For 'the valley of the Graces' Marivaux has 'la demeure du Je ne sais quoi'.

³ This sentence is derived from *ibid.*, p. 230.

⁴ *Carmina* i. 19. 8.

compassion with humid eye; she now sparkles with joy, soon every feature speaks distress: her looks at times invite our approach, at others repress our presumption, the goddess cannot be properly called beautiful under any one of these forms, but by combining
 5 them all, she beccmes irresistibly pleasing." Adieu.

LETTER LXXVII.¹

[The behaviour of a shop keeper and his journeyman.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

10 **T**HE Shops of London are as well furnished as those of Pekin. Those of London have a picture hung at their door, informing the passengers what they have to sell, as those at Pekin have a board to assure the buyer, that they have no intentions to cheat him.²

I was this morning to buy silk for a night-cap; immediately upon
 15 entering the mercer's shop, the master and his two men, with wigs plaistered with powder, appeared to ask my commands. They were certainly the civilest people alive; if I but looked, they flew to the place, where I cast my eye; every motion of mine sent them running round the whole shop for my satisfaction. I informed them that I
 20 wanted what was good, and they shewed me not less than forty pieces, and each was better than the former; the prettiest pattern in nature, and the fittest in the world for night-caps. My very good friend, said I to the mercer, you must not pretend to instruct me in silks, I know these in particular to be no better than your mere
 25 flimsy *Bungees*.³ *That may be*, cried the mercer, who I afterwards found had never contradicted a man in his life, *I can't pretend to say*

1 with joy] 62; in joy PL

4 beautiful] 62; Grace PL

5 irresistibly pleasing] 62; irresistible PL

21 and each . . . the former:] 62; each of which was said to be PL

24 these] 62; them PL your] 62; one of your PL

26 his] 62; all his PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Monday, 22 September 1760.

² See Du Halde, i. 64: ' . . . before the Door of each [shop], there is placed a Pedestal, on which is erected a Board 7 or 8 Foot high . . . ; you sometimes find on it the Names of two or three sorts of Goods, which are sold there, and at the Bottom that of the Shop Keeper himself, with these Words, *Pû-hû*, that is, *he will not cheat you*.'

³ *OED* has no other use of this word, and it does not occur in Du Halde's description

but they may; but I can assure you, my Lady Trail has had a sacque from this piece this very morning. But friend, said I, though my Lady has chosen a sacque from it, I see no necessity that I should wear it for a night-cap. *That may be,* returned he again, *yet what becomes a pretty Lady, will at any time look well on a handsome Gentleman.* 5 This short compliment was thrown in so very seasonably upon my ugly face, that even tho' I disliked the silk, I desired him to cut me off the pattern of a night-cap.

While this business was consigned to his journeyman, the master himself took down some pieces of silk still finer than any I had yet 10 seen, and spreading them before me, *There, cries he, there's beauty, my Lord Snakeskin has bespoke the fellow to this for the birth-night this very morning; it would look charmingly in waistcoats.* But I don't want a waistcoat, replied I: *Not want a waistcoat,* returned the mercer; *then I would advise you to buy one; when waistcoats are wanted, you 15 may depend upon it they will come dear. Always buy before you want, and you are sure to be well used, as they say in Cheap-side.* There was so much justice in his advice, that I could not refuse taking it; besides, the silk, which was really a good one, encreased the temptation, so I gave orders for that too. 20

As I was waiting to have my bargains measured and cut, which I know not how, they executed but slowly; during the interval, the mercer entertained me with the modern manner of some of the nobility receiving company in their morning gowns; *Perhaps, Sir,* adds he, *you have a mind to see what kind of silk is universally worn.* 25 Without waiting for my reply, he spreads a piece before me, which might be reckoned beautiful, even in China. *If the nobility, continues he, were to know I sold this to any, under a Right Honourable, I should certainly lose their custom; you see, my Lord, it is at once rich, tastey, and quite the thing.* I am no Lord, interrupted I.—*I beg pardon,* 30 cried he, *but be pleased to remember, when you intend buying a morning-gown, that you had an offer from me of something worth money. Conscience, Sir, conscience, is my way of dealing; you may buy a*

1 *they*] 62; it PL

2 *this piece*] 62; it PL

16 *dear*] 62; *dearer* PL

17 *as they say in Cheap-side*] 62; as the saying is PL

morning-gown now, or you may stay till they become dearer and less fashionable, but it is not my business to advise. In short, most reverend Fum, he persuaded me to buy a morning-gown also, and would probably have persuaded me to have bought half the goods in his shop, if I had stayed long enough, or was furnished with sufficient money.

Upon returning home, I could not help reflecting with some astonishment, how this very man with such a confined education and capacity, was yet capable of turning me as he thought proper, and molding me to his inclinations! I knew he was only answering his own purposes, even while he attempted to appear solicitous about mine; yet by a voluntary infatuation, a sort of passion compounded of vanity and good nature, I walked into the snare with my eyes open, and put myself to future pain in order to give him immediate pleasure. The wisdom of the ignorant, somewhat resembles the instinct of animals; it is diffused in but a very narrow sphere, but within that circle it acts with vigour, uniformity, and success. Adieu.

LETTER LXXVIII.¹

[The French ridiculed after their own manner.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

FROM my former accounts you may be apt to fancy the English the most ridiculous people under the sun. They are indeed ridiculous, yet every other nation in Europe is equally so, each laughs at each, and the Asiatic at all.

I may upon another occasion point out what is most strikingly absurd in other countries, I shall at present confine myself only to France. The first national peculiarity a traveller meets upon entering that kingdom, is an odd sort of a staring vivacity in every eye, not excepting even the children;² the people it seems have got it into

¹⁶ that] 62; the PL

²³⁻²⁴ indeed ridiculous] 62; indeed ridiculous enough PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 26 September 1760.

² Cf. the letter on the French, signed Ralph English, in the *Englishman*, No. 40, for 5 January 1713/14 (1714), p. 187: '... the Children ... have an odd staring Vivacity in their Eyes, and a pert Chagrin is the first Humour you discover.' Other borrowings from this same source are pointed out below.

their heads, that they have more wit than others, and so stare in order to look smart.

I know not how it happens, but there appears a sickly delicacy in the faces of their finest women. This may have introduced the use of paint, and paint produces wrinkles, so that a fine Lady shall look like an hag at twenty-three. But as in some measure they never appear young, so it may be equally asserted, that they actually think themselves never old; a gentle Miss shall prepare for new conquests at sixty, shall hobble a rigadon when she can scarce walk without a crutch, she shall affect the girl, play her fan and her eyes, and talk of sentiments, bleeding hearts, and expiring for love, when actually dying with age. Like a departing philosopher, she attempts to make her last moments the most brilliant of her life.

Their civility to strangers is what they are chiefly proud of, and to confess sincerely, their beggars are the very politest beggars I ever knew; in other places a traveller is addressed with a piteous whine, or a sturdy solemnity, but a French beggar shall ask your charity with a very genteel bow, and thank you for it with a smile and a shrugg.

Another instance of this peoples breeding I must not forget. An Englishman would not speak his native language in a company of foreigners where he was sure that none understood him; a travelling Hottentot himself would be silent if acquainted only with the language of his country, but a Frenchman shall talk to you whether you understand his language or not; never troubling his head whether you have learned French, still he keeps up the conversation, fixes his eye full in your face, and asks a thousand questions, which he answers himself for want of a more satisfactory reply.

But their civility to foreigners is not half so great as their admiration of themselves. Every thing that belongs to them and their nation is great; magnificent beyond expression; quite romantic! every garden is a paradise, every hovel a palace, and every woman an angel. They shut their eyes close, throw their mouths wide open, and cry out in rapture: *Sacre! What beauty; O Ciel, what taste, mort*

4 women. This] 62; women; this *PL*

10 she shall] 62; *om. PL*

12 age. Like] 62; age, like *PL*

15 beggars are . . . politest beggars] 62; beggarmen are the very politest beggarmen *PL*

20 forget. An] 62; forget; an *PL*

25 his language] 62; him *PL*

de ma vie, what grandeur,¹ was ever any people like ourselves; we are the nation of men, and all the rest no better than two legged barbarians.

I fancy the French would make the best cooks in the world, if they
 5 had but meat; as it is they can dress you out five different dishes from a nettle top, seven from a dock-leaf, and twice as many from a frog's haunches; these eat prettily enough when one is a little used to them, are easy of digestion, and seldom overload the stomach with crudities. They seldom dine under seven hot dishes; it is true, in-
 10 deed, with all this magnificence, they seldom spread a cloath before the guests; but in that I can't be angry with them, since those who have got no linnen on their backs, may very well be excused for wanting it upon their tables.

Even religion itself loses its solemnity among them. Upon their
 15 roads at about every five miles distance, you see an image of the Virgin Mary dressed up in grim head-cloaths, painted cheeks, and an old red petticoat; before her a lamp is often seen burning, at which, with the saint's permission, I have frequently lighted my pipe. Instead of the Virgin you are sometimes presented with a crucifix,
 20 at other times with a wooden Saviour, fitted out in complete garniture, with sponge, spear, nails, pincers, hammer, bees-wax, and vinegar-bottle.² Some of these images, I have been told, came down from heaven; if so, in heaven they have but bungling workmen.

In passing through their towns you frequently see the men sitting
 25 at the doors knitting stockings, while the care of cultivating the ground and pruning the vines falls to the women. This is perhaps the reason why the fair sex are granted some peculiar privileges in this country, particularly, when they can get horses, of riding without a side-saddle.³

11 can't] *PL*; cannot 62

14 them. Upon] 62; them; upon *PL*

¹ Cf. the *Englishman*, p. 188: 'The Natives imagine whatever belongs to their King great to Astonishment, all romantick; every Horse is *un Pegase*, and every Hovel *un Pavilion*. They shut their Eyes close, throw their Mouths wide open, and cry out in Rapture, *O che Magnifique! O che terrible Beaute!*'

² Cf. *ibid.*, p. 186: 'On the High-ways you have a variety of Crosses set up at about five Miles distance from one another. . . . Some have the compleat Garniture of wooden Saviour, Sponge, Spear, Hammer, Nails, Pincers, and Vinegar-Bottle. . . .'

³ *Ibid.*, p. 185: 'Cultivating the Ground, and pruning the Vines, fall to the Womens share, and generally all Drudgery even in Mechanicks; and therefore in recompence are privileged to ride astride.'

But I begin to think you may find this description pert and dull enough; perhaps it is so, yet in general it is the manner in which the French usually describe foreigners, and it is but just to *force* a part of that ridicule back upon them, which they attempt to lavish on others. Adieu.

5

LETTER LXXIX.¹

[The preparations of both theatres for a winter campaign.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

THE two theatres, which serve to amuse the citizens here, are again opened for the winter.² The mimetic troops, different from those of the state, begin their campaign when all the others quit the field; and at a time when the Europeans cease to destroy each other in reality, they are entertained with mock battles upon the stage.

15

The dancing master once more shakes his quivering feet; the carpenter prepares his paradise of pasteboard; the hero resolves to cover his forehead with brass, and the heroine begins to scour up her copper tail, preparative to future operations; in short all are in motion, from the theatrical letter-carrier in yellow cloaths, to Alexander the Great that stands on a stool.³

20

Both houses have already commenced hostilities. War, open war! and no quarter received or given! Two singing women, like heralds, have begun the contest; the whole town is divided on this solemn

¹ may] 62; will PL

² is so] 62; may be so PL

¹¹ mimetic troops] 62; troops of the stage PL

¹² all the] 62; all PL

¹⁵ stage] 62; theatre PL

²¹ that] 62; who PL

¹ From the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 30 September 1760.

² Drury Lane had opened for the season on Saturday, 20 September, and Covent Garden the following Monday.

³ Possibly the reference is to the last scene of Nathaniel Lee's *The Rival Queens*, where Alexander, inflamed with grief and almost mad, '*Jumps into the chair*'. This stage direction, which is not given in early editions, is found in the edition of 1776, 'with alterations. As it is now performed at the Theatres-Royal in Drury-Lane and Covent-Garden'. When Goldsmith wrote, the play had last been performed, according to Genest, on 25 March 1760 at Covent Garden.

occasion;¹ one has the finest pipe, the other the finest manner; one curtesies to the ground, the other salutes the audience with a smile; one comes on with modesty which asks, the other with boldness which extorts applause; one wears powder, the other has none; one
 5 has the longest waist, but the other appears most easy; all, all is important and serious; the town as yet perseveres in its neutrality, a cause of such moment demands the most mature deliberation, they continue to exhibit, and it is very possible this contest may continue to please to the end of the season.

- 10 But the Generals of either army, have, as I am told, several reinforcements to lend occasional assistance. If they produce a pair of diamond buckles at one house, we have a pair of eye-brows that can match them at t'other. If we outdo them in our attitude, they can overcome us by a shrugg; if we can bring more children on the stage,
 15 they can bring more guards in red cloaths, who strut and shoulder their swords to the astonishment of every spectator.

They tell me here, that people frequent the theatre in order to be instructed as well as amused. I smile to hear the assertion. If I ever go to one of their playhouses, what with trumpets, hallowing behind
 20 the stage, and bawling upon it, I am quite dizzy before the performance is over. If I enter the house with any sentiments in my head,

6 neutrality,] 62; neutrality, and they continue to exhibit: PL

7-8 they continue to exhibit,] 62; om. PL

8-9 continue to please] 62; be carried on PL

13 t'other] PL; the other 62

19 trumpets] 62; drums, trumpets PL

¹ The contest was between Mrs. Vincent and Miss Brent. During the preceding summer they had been rival singers at Vauxhall (see 'A Parallel between Mrs. Vincent and Miss Brent' in the *British Magazine* for June 1760; this essay was ascribed to Goldsmith in 1798 and has been reprinted in editions of his works, but the ascription is very doubtful, and the essay is not included in this edition). The rivalry was continued in the new theatrical season with Miss Brent singing the part of Polly in *The Beggar's Opera* at Covent Garden and Mrs. Vincent, 'who never appeared on any stage before', singing the same part at Drury Lane. For a comparison of the two see *Read's Weekly Journal* for Saturday, 27 September 1760: 'Tuesday night Mrs. Vincent made her appearance, amidst a general acclamation in the part of Polly. She seems to be allowed, universally, a better figure and speaker, in the character than her antagonist; but to fall short of her in respect to power. It is certain Miss Brent does not picture that native simplicity, that engaging innocence of Polly, so truly as the other; but on the other hand she ravishes in some part of her singing, where Mrs. Vincent only barely pleases.' In Letter LXXXV, published three weeks later, Goldsmith has further remarks on the contest.

I am sure to have none going away, the whole mind being filled with a dead march, a funeral procession, a cat-call, a jigg, or a tempest.

There is perhaps nothing more easy than to write properly for the English theatre; I am amazed that none are apprenticed to the trade. The author, when well acquainted with the value of thunder and lightning, when versed in all the mystery of scene shifting, and trap-doors; when skilled in the proper periods to introduce a wire-walker, or a water-fall; when instructed in every actor's peculiar talent, and capable of adapting his speeches to the supposed excellence; when thus instructed, knows all that can give a modern audience pleasure. One player shines in an exclamation, another in a groan, a third in an horror, a fourth in a start, a fifth in a smile, a sixth faints, and a seventh figets round the stage with peculiar vivacity; that piece therefore will succeed best where each has a proper opportunity of shining; the actors business is not so much to adapt himself to the poet, as the poet's to adapt himself to the actor.

The great secret therefore of tragedy-writing at present, is a perfect acquaintance with theatrical *ah's* and *oh's*, a certain number of these interspersed with *gods! tortures, racks, and damnation*, shall distort every actor almost into convulsions, and draw tears from every spectator; a proper use of these will infallibly fill the whole house with applause. But above all, a whining scene must strike most forcibly. I would advise from my present knowledge of the audience, the two favourite players of the town to introduce a scene of this sort in every play. Towards the middle of the last act, I would have them enter with wild looks and out-spread arms; there is no necessity for speaking, they are only to groan at each other, they must vary the

1 the whole mind being] 62; and the whole mind is only PL

2 cat-call, a] 62; cat-call and PL

3 easy] 62; difficult PL

4 theatre; I . . . the trade.] 62; theatre. One must be bound 'prentice to it. PL

5 author, when] 62; author must be PL

5-6 thunder and lightning, when] 62; every pound of thunder and lightning in the house; he must be PL

7 when skilled in] 62; he must know PL

8 when instructed in] 62; he must understand PL

9 capable of adapting] 62; adapt PL

9-10 excellence; when . . . audience pleasure] 62; excellence PL

12 an horror] PL; a horror 62 faints] 62; faints away with grace PL

16 poet's to adapt himself to] 62; poet's to write for PL

17 tragedy-writing] 62; tragedy-writing here PL

18 *oh's*] 62; *ho's* PL

21 will infallibly fill] 62; has filled PL

22-9 (p. 326) applause. But . . . author. All] 62; applause; all PL

tones of exclamation and despair through the whole theatrical gamut, wring their figures into every shape of distress, and when their calamities have drawn a proper quantity of tears from the sympathetic spectators, they may go off in dumb solemnity at different
 5 doors clasp[ing] their hands, or slapping their pocket-holes; this, which may be called a tragic pantomime, will answer every purpose of moving the passions, as well as words could have done, and it must save those expences which go to reward an author.

All modern plays that would keep the audience alive must be
 10 conceived in this manner, and indeed, many a modern play is made up on no other plan. This is the merit that lifts up the heart, like opium, into a rapture of insensibility, and can dismiss the mind from all the fatigue of thinking: this is the eloquence that shines in many a long forgotten scene which has been reckoned excessive fine upon
 15 acting; this the lightening that flashes no less in the Hyperbolical tyrant, *who breakfasts on the wind*, than in little Norval, *as harmless as the babe unborn*.¹ Adieu.

LETTER LXXX.²

[The evil tendency of encreasing penal laws, or enforcing even those already in
 20 being, with rigour.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

I HAVE always regarded the spirit of mercy, which appears in the Chinese laws with admiration. An order for the execution of
 25 a criminal is carried from court by slow journies of six miles a day, but a pardon is sent down with the most rapid dispatch. If five sons

10-11 manner, and . . . plan. This] 62; manner; this *PL*

11 lifts up] 62; lifts *PL*

12 rapture of] 62; rapturous *PL*

13 is the eloquence] 62; the merit *PL*

14 scene] 62; play *PL*

15 no] 62; not *PL*

¹ Goldsmith probably had in mind lines 23-24 of Act III in John Home's *Douglas*:

I know no more than does the child unborn
 Of what you charge me with.

But the lines are spoken by a prisoner later identified as Old Norval and in no way refer to Young Norval (Douglas).

² In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 3 October 1760.

of the same father be guilty of the same offence, one of them is forgiven, in order to continue the family and comfort his aged parents in their decline.¹

Similar to this, there is a spirit of mercy breathes through the laws of England, which some erroneously endeavour to suppress; the laws 5 however seem unwilling to punish the offender, or to furnish the officers of justice with every means of acting with severity. Those who arrest debtors are denied the use of arms, the nightly watch is permitted to repress the disorders of the drunken citizens only with clubs; justice in such a case seems to hide her terrors, and permits 10 some offenders to escape rather than load any with a punishment disproportioned to the crime.

Thus it is the glory of an Englishman, that he is not only governed by laws, but that these are also tempered by mercy;² a country restrained by severe laws, and those too executed with severity (as 15 in Japan) is under the most terrible species of tyranny; a royal tyrant is generally dreadful only to the great, but numerous penal laws grind every rank of people, and chiefly those least able to resist oppression, the poor.

It is very possible, thus for a people to become slaves to laws of 20 their own enacting, as the Athenians were to those of Draco. "It might first happen (says the historian) that men with peculiar talents for villainy attempted to evade the ordinances already established; their practices therefore soon brought on a new law levelled against them; but the same degree of cunning which had taught the knave 25 to evade the former statutes, taught him to evade the latter also; he flew to new shifts, while justice pursued with new ordinances; still however he kept his proper distance, and whenever one crime was judged penal by the state, he left committing it in order to practise

5-6 England, which . . . laws however] 62; England; they *PL*

7 acting with severity] 62; fulfilling with severity the letter of the law *PL*

10 in such a case] 62; here *PL* her] 62; its *PL*

12 crime] 62; offence *PL*

13 Thus it] 62; It *PL*

14 these] 62; those *PL*

17 only] *PL*; *om.* 62

18 least] 62; who are least *PL*

24 therefore] 62; *om.* *PL*

¹ Cf. the anecdote concerning 'the great emperor Ginsong' in Letter XLII above,

² Cf. Letter L above,

some unforbidden species of villainy. Thus the criminal against whom the threatenings were denounced always escaped free; while the simple rogue alone felt the rigour of justice. In the mean time penal laws became numerous, almost every person in the state un-
 5 knowingly at different times offended, and was every moment subject to a malicious prosecution." In fact, penal laws instead of preventing crimes are generally enacted after the commission, instead of repressing the growth of ingenious villainy, only multiply deceit, by putting it upon new shifts and expedients of practising
 10 with impunity.

Such laws therefore resemble the guards which are sometimes imposed upon tributary Princes, apparently indeed to secure them from danger, but in reality, to confirm their captivity.

Penal laws it must be allowed, secure property in a state, but they
 15 also diminish personal security in the same proportion; there is no positive law how equitable soever, that may not be sometimes capable of injustice. When a law enacted to make theft punishable with death, happens to be equitably executed, it can at best only guard our possessions; but when by favour or ignorance justice pronounces a
 20 wrong verdict, it then attacks our lives, since in such a case the whole community suffers with the innocent victim; if therefore in order to secure the effects of one man, I should make a law which may take away the life of another, in such a case to attain a smaller good I am guilty of a greater evil, to secure society in the possession of a bauble,
 25 I render a real and valuable possession precarious. And indeed the experience of every age may serve to vindicate the assertion; no law could be more just than that called *lesæ majestatis*, when Rome was governed by Emperors. It was but reasonable, that every conspiracy against the administration should be detected and punished; yet

1 unforbidden] 62; untried *PL*

3 the simple . . . justice. In] 62; in *PL*

11 therefore] 62; *om. PL*

12 to secure] 62; under pretext of securing *PL*

15 personal] 62; *om. PL*

17-21 injustice. When . . . innocent victim] 62; injustice *PL*

22 may take] 62; unjustly takes *PL*

24 society in . . . of a] 62; one in the possession of his *PL*

25 render a . . . possession precarious] 62; deprive another of all that he is possessed of *PL* And indeed] 62; When I say that penal laws, though in the mean equitable, may be frequently guilty of injustice; there is *PL*, with *par.*

26 may serve] 62; *om. PL*

27 could] 62; could in the nature of things *PL*

28 Emperors. It] 62; Emperors, it *PL*

what terrible slaughters succeeded in consequence of its enacting; proscriptions, stranglings, poisonings, in almost every family of distinction, yet all done in a legal way, every criminal had his trial, and lost his life by a majority of witnesses.

And such will ever be the case, where punishments are numerous, 5 and where a weak, vicious, but above all, where a mercenary magistrate is concerned in their execution; such a man desires to see penal laws encreased, since he too frequently has it in his power to turn them into instruments of extortion; in such hands the more laws, the wider means, not of satisfying justice, but of satiating avarice. 10

A mercenary magistrate who is rewarded in proportion, not to his integrity, but to the number he convicts, must be a person of the most unblemished character, or he will lean on the side of cruelty; and when once the work of injustice is begun, it is impossible to tell how far it will proceed; it is said of the Hyena that naturally it is no 15 way ravenous, but when once it has tasted human flesh, it becomes the most voracious animal of the forest, and continues to persecute mankind ever after; a corrupt magistrate may be considered as a human hyena, he begins perhaps by a private snap, he goes on to a morsel among friends, he proceeds to a meal in public, from a meal 20 he advances to a surfeit, and at last sucks blood like a vampyre.

Not into such hands should the administration of justice be entrusted, but to those who know how to reward as well as to punish; it was a fine saying of Nangfu the emperor,¹ who being told that his enemies had raised an insurrection in one of the distant provinces, 25 Come then, my friends, said he, follow me, and I promise you that we shall quickly destroy them; he marched forward, and the rebels submitted upon his approach. All now thought that he would take the most signal revenge, but were surprized to see the captives treated with mildness and humanity. How, cries his first minister, 30 is this the manner in which you fulfil your promise; your royal word was given that your enemies should be destroyed, and behold you

2 proscriptions] 62; presc[r]iptions *PL*

3 done] 62; was done *PL*

4 witnesses] 62; witnesses against him *PL*

10 avarice] 62; his avarice *PL*

13 on] 62; to *PL*

15-16 no way] 62; in no way *PL*

20 morsel] 62; slice *PL* he proceeds] 62; proceeds *PL*

have pardoned all, and even caressed some! I promised, replied the emperor, with a generous air, to *destroy* my enemies, I have fulfilled my word, for see they are enemies no longer; I have made *friends* of them.

- 5 This, could it always succeed, were the true method of destroying the enemies of a state, well it were if rewards and mercy alone could regulate the common-wealth, but since punishments are sometimes necessary, let them at least be rendered terrible, by being executed but seldom, and let justice lift her sword rather to terrify than re-
10 vengeance. Adieu.

LETTER LXXXI.¹

[The ladies trains ridiculed.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

- 15 I HAVE as yet given you but a short and imperfect description of the Ladies of England. Woman, my friend, is a subject not easily understood, even in China; what therefore can be expected from my knowledge of the sex in a country where they are universally allowed to be riddles, and I but a stranger.
- 20 To confess a truth, I was afraid to begin the description, lest the sex should undergo some new revolution before it was finished; and my picture should thus become old before it could well be said to have ever been new. To-day they are lifted upon stilts, to-morrow they lower their heels and raise their heads; their cloaths at one time
25 are bloated out with whalebone; at present they have laid their hoops aside and are become as slim as mermaids. All, all is in a state of continual fluctuation, from the Mandarin's wife, who rattles through the streets in her chariot, to the humble sempstress, who clatters over the pavement in iron-shod pattens.²

3 see they . . . no longer;] 62; see, PL

10 Adieu.] 62; om. PL

21 new] 62; om. PL

23 stilts] 62; high heel'd shoes PL

28 chariot] 62; chariot and six PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Monday, 6 October 1760.

² Sells (pp. 108-9) believes this paragraph to be modelled on a passage describing the French in Montesquieu's *Lettres persanes*, lettre 99: 'Que me serviroit de te faire une

What chiefly distinguishes the sex at present is the train. As a Lady's quality or fashion was once determined here by the circumference of her hoop, both are now measured by the length of her tail. Women of moderate fortunes are contented with tails moderately long; but ladies of true taste and distinction set no bounds to their ambition in this particular. I am told the Lady Mayoress, on days of ceremony, carries one longer than a bell-weather of Bantam, whose tail you know is trundled along in a wheel-barrow.¹

Sun of China, what contradictions do we find in this strange world!² not only the people of different countries think in opposition to each other, but the inhabitants of a single island are often found inconsistent with themselves; would you believe it; this very people, my Fum, who are so fond of seeing their women with long tails, at the same time dock their horses to the very rump!!!

But you may easily guess that I am no way displeased with a fashion which tends to encrease a demand for the commodities of the East, and is so very beneficial to the country in which I was born. Nothing can be better calculated to encrease the price of silk than the present manner of dressing. A lady's train is not bought but at some expence, and after it has swept the public walks for a very few evenings, is fit to be worn no longer: more silk must be bought in order to repair the breach, and some ladies of peculiar œconomy are thus found to patch up their tails eight or ten times in a season. This unnecessary consumption may introduce poverty here, but then we shall be the richer for it in China.

The man in black, who is a professed enemy to this manner of ornamenting the tail, assures me, there are numberless inconveniences attending it, and that a lady dressed up to the fashion is as much

4 tails] 62; trains *PL*

14 rump] 62; bone *PL*

20 for] 62; but for *PL*

description exacte de leur habillement et de leurs parures? Une mode nouvelle viendrait détruire tout mon ouvrage, comme celui de leurs ouvriers, et, avant que tu n'eusses reçu ma lettre, tout seroit changé. . . .

'Quelquefois, les coëffures montent insensiblement, et une révolution les fait descendre tout à coup. Il a été un tems que leur hauteur immense mettoit le visage d'une femme au milieu d'elle-même. Dans un autre, c'étoit les pieds qui occupoient cette place: les talons faisoient un piedestal qui les tenoit en l'air.'

¹ Cf. 'On Dress' in the *Bee*: '... how she waddles along, with her train two yards behind her! She puts me in mind of my lord Bantam's Indian sheep, which are obliged to have their monstrous tails trundled along in a go-cart' (above, I, p. 378).

² Cf. 'On the Contradictions of the World. From Voltaire' in the *Bee*, No. VI.

a cripple as any in Nankin. But his chief indignation is levelled at those who dress in this manner, without a proper fortune to support it. He assures me, that he has known some who would have a tail, though they wanted a petticoat, and others who, without any other
 5 pretensions, fancied they became ladies merely from the addition of three superfluous yards of ragged silk; I know a thrifty good woman, continues he, who thinking herself obliged to carry a train like her betters, never walks from home without the uneasy apprehensions of wearing it out too soon; every excursion she makes gives her new
 10 anxiety, and her train is every bit as importunate, and wounds her peace as much as the bladder we sometimes see tied to the tail of a cat.

Nay, he ventures to affirm, that a train may often bring a lady into the most critical circumstances; for should a rude fellow, says he, offer to come up to ravish a kiss, and the lady attempt to avoid it,
 15 in retiring she must necessarily tread upon her train, and thus fall fairly upon her back, by which means every one knows,—her cloaths may be spoiled.¹

The ladies here make no scruple to laugh at the smallness of a Chinese slipper, but I fancy our wives at China would have a more
 20 real cause of laughter, could they but see the immoderate length of an European train. Head of Confucius, to view a human being crippling herself with a great unwieldy tail for our diversion; backward she cannot go, forward she must move but slowly, and if ever she attempts to turn round, it must be in a circle not smaller than
 25 that described by the wheeling crocodile, when it would face an assailant. And yet to think that all this confers importance and majesty! to think that a lady acquires additional respect from fifteen yards of trailing taffety! I can't contain; ha, ha, ha; this is certainly a remnant of European barbarity, the female Tartar dressed in
 30 sheep-skins is in far more convenient drapery.

1 Nankin] 62; all China PL

10 and her train is] 62; and, in short, her train is now become PL

16 knows,—] 62; knows, PL

17 spoiled.] *Following this PL has an additional par., om. 62:* But to be less serious, I have never seen a country where the ladies did not render themselves ridiculous, by a mistaken idea of elegance and beauty; your nose-borers, eye-brow-pluckers, and tooth-stainers, give us no very high opinions of humanity, yet how are they more absurd than the train-makers of Europe, or the feet-swathers of China?

18 here] 62; of Europe PL

21 being] 62; creature PL

25 wheeling] 62; *om. PL* it] 62; he PL

30 in far more convenient drapery] 62; far more at her ease PL

¹ This paragraph is copied from a passage in 'On Dress' in the *Bee* (above, I, p. 378).

Their own writers have sometimes inveigh'd against the absurdity of this fashion, but perhaps it has never been ridiculed so well as upon the Italian theatre, where Pasquarielo being engaged to attend on the countess of Fernambroco, having one of his hands employed in carrying her muff, and the other her lap-dog, he bears her train 5 majestically along by sticking it in the waistband of his breeches.

Adieu.

LETTER LXXXII.¹

[The sciences useful in a populous state, prejudicial in a barbarous one.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial 10 Academy at Pekin, in China.

A Dispute has for some time divided the philosophers of Europe; it is debated, whether arts and sciences are more serviceable or prejudicial to mankind.² They who maintain the cause of literature endeavour to prove their usefulness from the impossi- 15 bility of a large number of men subsisting in a small tract of country without them; from the pleasure which attends the acquisition, and from the influence of knowledge in promoting practical morality.³

They who maintain the opposite opinion, display the happiness and innocence of those uncultivated nations who live without learn- 20 ing; urge the numerous vices which are to be found only in polished society, enlarge upon the oppression, the cruelty and the blood which must necessarily be shed, in order to cement civil society, and insist upon the happy equality of conditions in a barbarous state, preferable to the unnatural subordination of a more refined constitution. 25

¹ Their own writers] 62; The writers of Europe *PL*; *no par.* 62

4 of Fernambroco] 62; *om.* *PL*

6 in] 62; into *PL*

15 usefulness] 62; utility, from the great benefits we receive from them in a refined community, *PL*

16 a large number of men] 62; numbers *PL* in a . . . of country] 62; *om.* *PL*

18 the influence] 62; their influence *PL*

25 constitution] 62; government *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 10 October 1760.

² Cf. the *Enquiry*: 'It has lately been disputed, whether the arts and sciences do most benefit, or injury to mankind' (above, I, p. 332, and see the note on the sentence).

³ Cf. Letter XI above.

This dispute which has already given so much employment to speculative indolence, has been managed with much ardour, and (not to suppress our sentiments) with but little sagacity. They who insist that the sciences are useful in *refined* society are certainly right, and
 5 they who maintain that *barbarous* nations are more happy without them are right also; but when one side for this reason attempts to prove them as universally useful to the solitary barbarian, as to the native of a crowded common-wealth; or when the other endeavours to banish them as prejudicial to all society, even from populous states
 10 as well as from the inhabitants of the wilderness, they are both wrong, since that knowledge which makes the happiness of a refined European, would be a torment to the precarious tenant of an Asiatic wild.

Let me, to prove this, transport the imagination for a moment to
 15 the midst of a forest in Siberia. There we behold the inhabitant, poor indeed, but equally fond of happiness with the most refined philosopher of China. The earth lies uncultivated and uninhabited for miles around him; his little family and he the sole and undisputed possessors. In such circumstances nature and reason will induce
 20 him to prefer a hunter's life to that of cultivating the earth. He will certainly adhere to that manner of living which is carried on at the smallest expence of labour, and that food which is most agreeable to the appetite; he will prefer indolent though precarious luxury, to a laborious though permanent competence, and a knowledge of his
 25 own happiness will determine him to persevere in native barbarity.¹

2 been] 62; been hitherto *PL*

2-3 not to] 62; for why should we *PL*

3 sagacity] 62; judgment *PL*

4 *refined*] 62; no italics *PL*

5 *barbarous*] 62; no italics *PL*

7-8 as universally . . . or when] 62; universally useful, or *PL*

9-10 even from . . . the wilderness,] 62; *om.* *PL*

12-13 precarious tenant of an Asiatic wild] 62; wandering inhabitant of the forests of Asia *PL*

14 to prove] 62; in order to prove *PL*

15 Siberia] 62; the wilds of Siberia *PL* the inhabitant] 62; an inhabitant *PL*

18 miles] 62; some miles *PL*

22 food] 62; kind of food *PL*

23 appetite;] 62; appetite. Hesitating a moment between tillage and the chase, *PL*
 prefer] 62; weigh *PL*

23-24 to a] 62; against a *PL*

24 and a] 62; and determine in favour of the former. Thus far a *PL*

25 persevere] 62; remain *PL*

¹ Goldsmith had given essentially the same account of why 'rude barbarians' do not

In like manner his happiness will incline him to bind himself by no law: Laws are made in order to secure present property, but he is possessed of no property which he is afraid to lose, and desires no more than will be sufficient to sustain him; to enter into compacts with others would be undergoing a voluntary obligation without the expectance of any reward. He and his countrymen are tenants, not rivals in the same inexhaustible forest; the encreased possessions of one by no means diminishes the expectations arising from equal assiduity in another; there are no need of laws therefore to repress ambition, where there can be no mischief attending its most boundless gratifications.

Our solitary Siberian will, in like manner, find the sciences not only entirely useless in directing his practice, but disgusting even in speculation. In every contemplation our curiosity must be first excited by the *appearances* of things, before our reason undergoes the fatigue of investigating the *causes*.¹ Some of those appearances are produced by experiment, others by minute enquiry; some arise from a knowledge of foreign climates, and others from an intimate study of our own. But there are few objects in comparison which present themselves to the inhabitant of a barbarous country; the game he hunts, or the transient cottage he builds, make up the chief objects of his concern; his curiosity therefore must be proportionably less; and if that is diminished, the reasoning faculty will be diminished in proportion.

Besides, sensual enjoyment adds wings to curiosity. We consider few objects with ardent attention but those which have some connection with our wishes, our pleasures, or our necessities. A desire

11 gratifications] 62; gratification *PL*

13 disgusting] 62; disagreeable *PL*

23 that] 62; his curiosity *PL*

25 sensual enjoyment] 62; it is sensual enjoyment that *PL* curiosity. We] 62; curiosity, we *PL*

27 wishes] 62; necessities *PL* necessities] 62; appetites *PL*

become social in 'A Comparative View of Races and Nations' published earlier in 1760 (below, III, pp. 72-73). With the following sentence cf. *ibid.*, p. 71.

¹ Cf. 'On Education' in the *Bee*: 'When the wonders of nature are never exposed to our view, we have no great desire to become acquainted with those parts of learning which pretend to account for the phenomena. . . . We should early, therefore, instruct them [children] in the experiments, if I may so express it, of knowledge, and leave to maturer age the accounting for the causes' (above, I, pp. 461-2).

of enjoyment first interests our passions in the pursuit, points out the object of investigation, and reason then comments where sense has led the way.¹ An encrease in the number of our enjoyments therefore necessarily produces an encrease of scientific research; but
 5 in countries where almost every enjoyment is wanting, reason there seems destitute of its great inspirer, and speculation is the business of fools when it becomes its own reward.

The barbarous Siberian is too wise, therefore to exhaust his time in quest of knowledge, which neither curiosity prompts, nor pleasure
 10 impels him to pursue. When told of the exact admeasurement of a degree upon the equator at Quito, he feels no pleasure in the account;² when informed that such a discovery tends to promote navigation and commerce, he finds himself no way interested in either. A discovery which some have pursued at the hazard of their lives, affects
 15 him with neither astonishment nor pleasure. He is satisfied with thoroughly understanding the few objects which contribute to his own felicity, he knows the properest places where to lay the snare for the sable, and discerns the value of furs with more than Euro-
 20 pean sagacity. More extended knowledge would only serve to render him unhappy, it might lend a ray to shew him the misery of his situation, but could not guide him in his efforts to avoid it. Ignorance is the happiness of the poor.

The misery of a Being endowed with sentiments above its capacity of fruition, is most admirably described in one of the fables of Loc-
 25 man the Indian moralist.³ "An elephant that had been peculiarly serviceable in fighting the battles of Wistnow, was ordered by the

2-3 where sense has led the way] 62; on the discovery *PL*

21-22 Ignorance is . . . the poor.] 62; *om. PL*

24 fruition] 62; enjoyment *PL*

¹ Cf. Letter XI above and 'A Comparative View of Races and Nations': 'Sensuality first finds out the pleasure, and wisdom comments on the discovery' (below, III, p. 73).

² The same example is given in Letter XI above and in 'A Comparative View of Races and Nations': 'The Indians of America, . . . when the members of the academy of Sciences at Paris went over to Quito, in order to measure a degree near the equator, were surprized at the folly and inutility of so long a journey' (below, III, p. 73).

³ The story that follows is probably Goldsmith's invention; at least it does not appear in *Æsop Naturaliz'd: in a Collection of Fables and Stories from Æsop, Locman, Pilpay, and Others* (3rd ed., 1711), *Les Contes et fables indiennes, de Bidpai et de Lokman*, traduites par M. Galland (Paris, 1724), or *Lokman's Arabic Fables*, literally translated by Francis Barham (Bath, 1869).

god to wish for whatever he thought proper, and the desire should be attended with immediate gratification. The elephant thanked his benefactor on bended knees, and desired to be endowed with the reason and the faculties of a man. Wistnow was sorry to hear the foolish request, and endeavoured to dissuade him from his misplaced ambition; but finding it to no purpose gave him at last such a portion of wisdom as could correct even the Zendavesta of Zoroaster. The reasoning Elephant went away rejoicing in his new acquisition, and though his body still retained its ancient form, he found his appetites and passions entirely altered. He first considered that it would not only be more comfortable, but also more becoming to wear cloaths; but unhappily he had no method of making them himself, nor had he the use of speech to demand them from others, and this was the first time he felt real anxiety. He soon perceived how much more elegantly men were fed than he, therefore he began to loath his usual food and longed for those delicacies which adorn the tables of princes; but here again he found it impossible to be satisfied; for though he could easily obtain flesh, yet he found it impossible to dress it in any degree of perfection. In short every pleasure that contributed to the felicity of mankind, served only to render him more miserable, as he found himself utterly deprived of the power of enjoyment. In this manner he led a repining, discontented life, detesting himself and displeased with his ill-judged ambition, till at last his benefactor Wistnow, taking compassion on his forlorn situation, restored him to the ignorance and the happiness which he was originally formed to enjoy."

No, my friend, to attempt to introduce the sciences into a nation of wandering barbarians is only to render them more miserable than even nature designed they should be. A life of simplicity is best fitted to a state of solitude. The great lawgiver of Russia attempted to improve the desolate inhabitants of Siberia, by sending among them some of the politest men of Europe. The consequence has shewn, that the country was as yet unfit to receive them; they languished for a time with a sort of exotic malady, every day degenerated from

8 reasoning] 62; *om. PL*

21 miserable, as he] 62; miserable. He knew its use, but *PL*

29 simplicity] 62; ignorance *PL*

30 The] *PL*; *par. 62* attempted] 62; thus attempted *PL*

32 The] 62; But the *PL*

34-1 (p. 338) every day . . . from themselves,] 62; *om. PL*

themselves, and at last, instead of rendering the country more polite, they conformed to the soil, and put on barbarity.¹

No, my friend, in order to make the sciences useful in any country, it must first become populous; the inhabitant must go through the
 5 different stages of hunter, shepherd, and husbandman, then when property becomes valuable, and consequently gives cause for injustice; then when laws are appointed to repress injury, and secure possession, when men by the sanction of those laws, become possessed of superfluity, when luxury is thus introduced and de-
 10 mands its continual supply, then it is that the sciences become necessary and useful; the state then cannot subsist without them; they must then be introduced, at once to teach men to draw the greatest possible quantity of pleasure from circumscribed possession; and to restrain them within the bounds of moderate enjoyment: The
 15 sciences are not the cause of luxury, but its consequence, and this destroyer thus brings with it an antidote which resists the virulence of its own poison. By asserting that luxury introduces the sciences, we assert a truth; but if with those, who reject the utility of learning we assert that the sciences also introduce luxury, we shall be at once
 20 false, absurd, and ridiculous. Adieu.

LETTER LXXXIII.²

[Some cautions on life, taken from a modern philosopher of China.]

From Lien Chi Altangi to Hingpo, by the way of Moscow.

25 **Y**OU are now arrived at an age, my son, when pleasure dissuades from application, but rob not by present gratification all the succeeding period of life of its happiness. Sacrifice a little pleasure

1 more] 62; *om. PL*

3 the sciences] 62; science *PL*

4 inhabitant] 62; inhabitants *PL*

5 hunter, shepherd, and husbandman] 62; being hunters, shepherds, and husbandmen *PL*

7 then when laws] 62; when laws *PL*

10 the sciences become] 62; science becomes *PL*

11-14 the state . . . and to] 62; it is introduced at once to teach men to supply their artificial appetites, and *PL*

14 moderate] 62; proper *PL* enjoyment: The] *PL*; enjoyment. The 62, *with par.*

16 thus] 62; *om. PL* resists] 62; resist *PL*

19 assert that] 62; convert the terms, and assert that *PL*

¹ Goldsmith had used this same example in 'A Comparative View of Races and Nations' (see below, III, p. 79).

² In the *Public Ledger* for Wednesday, 15 October 1760.

at first to the expectance of greater. The study of a very few years will make the rest of life compleatly easy.

But instead of continuing the subject myself, take the following instructions borrowed from a modern philosopher of China*. 'He who has begun his fortune by study will certainly confirm it by 5 perseverance. The love of books damps the passion for pleasure, and when this passion is once extinguished, life is then cheaply supported; thus a man being possessed of more than he wants, can never be subject to great disappointments, and avoids all those meannesses which indigence sometimes unavoidably produces.¹ 10

'There is unspeakable pleasure attending the life of a voluntary student. The first time I read an excellent book, it is to me just as if I had gained a new friend. When I read over a book I have perused before, it resembles the meeting with an old one. We ought to lay hold of every incident in life for improvement, the trifling as well as 15 the important. It is not one diamond alone which gives lustre to another, a common coarse stone is also employed for that purpose. Thus I ought to draw advantage from the insults and contempt I meet with from a worthless fellow. His brutality ought to induce me to self-examination, and correct every blemish that may have 20 given rise to his calumny.

'Yet with all the pleasures and profits which are generally produced by learning, parents often find it difficult to induce their children to study. They often seem dragged to what wears the appearance of application. Thus being dilatory in the beginning, all 25 future hopes of eminence are entirely cut off. If they find themselves obliged to write two lines more polite than ordinary, their pencil then seems as heavy as a mill-stone, and they spend ten years in turning two or three periods with propriety.

* A translation of this passage may also be seen in Du Halde, Vol. II. Fol. p. 47, and 58.² This extract will at least serve to shew that fondness for humour which appears in the writings of the Chinese.

¹ The last part of this sentence is close to a sentence in Goldsmith's letter to Ralph Griffiths of January 1759: 'I am guilty I own of meanness which poverty unavoidably brings with it' (*Collected Letters*, p. 67). Du Halde has: '... and being exempted from these Meannesses, he maintains his Rank, and makes himself respected.'

² The section of vol. ii of Du Halde from which Goldsmith draws his material is badly confused in the numbering of the pages, with some numbers appearing twice. His borrowing is from pp. 46 (= N1^v), 47 (= N2), 52 (= N2^v), 58, and 61. Goldsmith modifies his source considerably, and the penultimate paragraph of the letter does not seem to come from Du Halde.

'These persons are most at a loss when a banquet is almost over; the plate and the dice go round, that the number of little verses which each is obliged to repeat may be determined by chance. The booby, when it comes to his turn, appears quite stupid and insensible.

5 The company divert themselves with his confusion; and sneers, winks, and whispers are circulated at his expence. As for him he opens a pair of large heavy eyes, stares at all about him, and even offers to join in the laugh, without ever considering himself as the burthen of all their good humour.

10 'But it is of no importance to read much except you be regular in your reading. If it be interrupted for any considerable time, it can never be attended with proper improvement. There are some who study for one day with intense application, and repose themselves for ten days after. But wisdom is a coquet and must be courted with
15 unabating assiduity.

'It was a saying of the ancients, that a man never opens a book without reaping some advantage by it. I say with them, that every book can serve to make us more expert except romances, and these are no better than instruments of debauchery.¹ They are dangerous
20 fictions, where love is the ruling passion.

'The most indecent strokes there pass for turns of wit, intrigue and criminal liberties for gallantry and politeness. Assignations, and even villainy, are put in such strong lights, as may inspire, even grown men with the strongest passion; how much more therefore ought the
25 youth of either sex to dread them, whose reason is so weak and whose hearts are so susceptible of passion.

'To slip in by a back door, or leap a wall are accomplishments that when handsomely set off enchant a young heart. It is true the plot is commonly wound up by a marriage, concluded with the consent
30 of parents, and adjusted by every ceremony prescribed by law. But as in the body of the work there are many passages that offend good morals, overthrow laudable customs, violate the laws, and destroy the duties most essential to society, virtue is thereby exposed to the most dangerous attacks.

35 'But say some, the authors of these romances have nothing in view, but to represent vice punished and virtue rewarded. Granted. But

¹ The remarks on romances here and in the following paragraphs agree with sentiments expressed by Goldsmith elsewhere, and they have been taken as his comment on the novelists of the day. The whole passage, however, is drawn with very little change from Du Halde, ii. 58.

will the greater number of readers take notice of these punishments and rewards? Are not their minds carried to something else? Can it be imagined that the art with which the author inspires the love of virtue, can overcome that crowd of thoughts which sway them to licentiousness. To be able to inculcate virtue by so leaky a vehicle, 5 the author must be a philosopher of the first rank. But in our age we can find but few first rate philosophers.

'Avoid such performances where vice assumes the face of virtue, seek wisdom and knowledge without ever thinking you have found them. A man is wise, while he continues in the pursuit of wisdom; 10 but when he once fancies that he has found the object of his enquiry, he then becomes a fool. Learn to pursue virtue from the man that is blind, who never makes a step without first examining the ground with his staff.

'The world is like a vast sea, mankind like a vessel sailing on its tempestuous bosom. Our prudence is its sails, the sciences serve us 15 for oars, good or bad fortune are the favourable or contrary winds, and judgment is the rudder, without this last the vessel is tossed by every billow, and will find shipwreck in every breeze. In a word, obscurity and indigence are the parents of vigilance and œconomy; 20 vigilance and œconomy of riches and honour; riches and honour of pride and luxury; pride and luxury of impurity and idleness, and impurity and idleness again produce indigence and obscurity. Such are the revolutions of life.' Adieu.

LETTER LXXXIV.¹

25

[The anecdotes of several poets, who lived and died in circumstances of wretchedness.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

I Fancy the character of a poet is in every country the same, 30 fond of enjoying the present, careless of the future, his conversation that of a man of sense, his actions those of a fool; of fortitude

3 art] *Du Halde, PL, 62*; heart 1774 and most later editions
16 is its] 62; are it *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 17 October 1760.

able to stand unmoved at the bursting of an earthquake, yet of sensibility to be affected by the breaking of a tea-cup;¹ such is his character, which considered in every light is the very opposite of that which leads to riches.

5 The poets of the west are as remarkable for their indigence as their genius, and yet among the numerous hospitals designed to relieve the poor, I have heard of but one erected for the benefit of decayed authors. This was founded by Pope Urban VIII. and called the retreat of the incurables, intimating, that it was equally impossible
10 to reclaim the patients, who sued for reception, from poverty, or from poetry. To be sincere, were I to send you an account of the lives of the western poets, either antient or modern, I fancy you would think me employed in collecting materials for an history of human wretchedness.²

15 Homer is the first poet and beggar of note among the antients; he was blind, and sung his ballads about the streets; but it is observed, that his mouth was more frequently filled with verses than with bread. Plautus the comic poet was better off, he had two trades, he was a poet for his diversion, and helped to turn a mill in order to gain
20 a livelihood. Terence was a slave, and Boethius died in a jail.

Among the Italians, Paulo Burghese, almost as good a poet as Tasso, knew fourteen different trades, and yet died because he could get employment in none. Tasso himself, who had the most amiable character of all poets, has often been obliged to borrow a crown from
25 some friend, in order to pay for a month's subsistence; he has left us a pretty sonnet, addressed to his cat, in which he begs the light of her eyes to write by, being too poor to afford himself a candle.

7 erected] 62; created *PL*

10 or] 62; as *PL*

13-14 human wretchedness] 62; starving *PL*

15 beggar] 62; beggar-man *PL*

¹ Cf. the description of 'the author' in the *Enquiry*: '... indeed, a *child* of the public he is in all respects; for while so well able to direct others, how incapable is he frequently found of guiding himself. His simplicity exposes him to all the insidious approaches of cunning, his sensibility to the slightest invasions of contempt. Though possessed of fortitude to stand unmoved the expected bursts of an earthquake, yet of feelings so exquisitely poignant, as to agonize under the slightest disappointment' (above, I, p. 315).

² The account that follows, particularly the account of the modern poets, shows so much specialized biographical knowledge that it seems probable from an acquaintance with Goldsmith's literary habits that he turned to some single source, as yet undiscovered.

But Bentivoglio, poor Bentivoglio! chiefly demands our pity. His comedies will last with the Italian language; he dissipated a noble fortune in acts of charity and benevolence, but falling into misery in his old age, was refused to be admitted into an hospital which he himself had erected.

In Spain it is said, the great Cervantes died of hunger, and it is certain, that the famous Camoens ended his days in an hospital.

If we turn to France, we shall there find even stronger instances of the ingratitude of the public. Vaugelas, one of the politest writers, and one of the honestest men of his time, was surnamed the Owl, from his being obliged to keep within all day, and venture out only by night through fear of his creditors. His last will is very remarkable; after having bequeathed all his worldly substance to the discharging his debts, he goes on thus; But as there still may remain some creditors unpaid, even after all that I have shall be disposed of, in such a case, it is my last will, that my body should be sold to the surgeons to the best advantage, and that the purchase should go to the discharging those debts which I owe to society; so that if I could not, while living, at least when dead, I may be useful.

Cassander was one of the greatest geniuses of his time, yet all his merit could not procure him a bare subsistence. Being by degrees driven into an hatred of all mankind from the little pity he found amongst them, he even ventured at last ungratefully to impute his calamities to providence. In his last agonies, when the priest entreated him to rely on the justice of heaven, and ask mercy from him that made him; *if God*, replies he, *has shewn me no justice here, what reason have I to expect any from him hereafter?* But being answered, that a suspension of justice was no argument that should induce us to doubt of its reality, let me entreat you, continued his confessor, by all that is dear, to be reconciled to God your father, your maker, and friend. *No*, replied the exasperated wretch, *you know the manner in which he left me to live;* (and pointing to the straw on which he was stretched) *and you see the manner in which he leaves me to die!*

But the sufferings of the poet in other countries is nothing when compared to his distresses here, the names of Spencer and Otway, Butler and Dryden, are every day mentioned as a national reproach,

7 Camoens] 62; Agrippa PL

18-19 society; so . . . be useful] 62; society PL

28 was no . . . induce us] 62; is no reason PL

31 exasperated] 62; expiring PL

some of them lived in a state of precarious indigence, and others literally died of hunger.¹

At present the few poets of England no longer depend on the Great for subsistence, they have now no other patrons but the public,
 5 and the public collectively considered, is a good and a generous master.² It is indeed, too frequently mistaken as to the merits of every candidate for favour; but to make amends, it is never mistaken long. A performance indeed may be forced for a time into reputation, but destitute of real merit it soon sinks; time, the touch-
 10 stone of what is truly valuable, will soon discover the fraud, and an author should never arrogate to himself any share of success, till his works have been read at least ten years with satisfaction.

A man of letters at present, whose works are valuable, is perfectly sensible of their value. Every polite member of the community by
 15 buying what he writes, contributes to reward him. The ridicule therefore of living in a garret, might have been wit in the last age, but continues such no longer, because no longer true.³ A writer of real merit now may easily be rich if his heart be set only on fortune: and as for those who have no merit, it is but fit that such should
 20 remain in merited obscurity. He may now refuse an invitation to dinner, without fearing to incur his patron's displeasure, or to starve by remaining at home. He may now venture to appear in company with just such cloaths as other men generally wear, and talk even to

1 indigence] 62; subsistence *PL*

5 good] 62; brave *PL*

8 A performance indeed] 62; By the patronage of the great a performance *PL*

9 reputation] 62; reputation, even among the lower classes of mankind *PL*

12 works have] 62; work has *PL*

19 as] *PL*; *om.* 62

¹ These same names appear in a similar context in the *Prompter*, No. CL (13 April 1736): '... we have had Poets, who, notwithstanding their Faults, have had unquestionable Merit . . . ; yet those Authors have not found any tolerable Encouragement from our great Men: Witness, *Spencer* in one Kind, *Butler* in another, *Otway* in a third, and *Dryden* in many Kinds. *Spencer* and *Butler* starv'd, *Otway* dy'd in great Want, as *Dryden* must have done, had not his Works borne a considerable Price with the Bookseller. . . .' For other places where Goldsmith mentions the ill treatment of Butler, Dryden, and Otway, see their names in the Index.

² This is in contrast with the *Enquiry*, where he seems to lament the time when 'patronage was fashionable among our nobility' (above, I, p. 311).

³ When Goldsmith wrote the *Enquiry*, he seemed to think this ridicule still continuing: 'His [the poet's] taking refuge in garrets and cellars, and living among vermin, have, of late, been violently objected to him . . .' (above, I, p. 314). See also *Collected Letters*, p. 51.

princes, with all the conscious superiority of wisdom. Though he cannot boast of fortune here, yet he can bravely assert the dignity of independence. Adieu.

LETTER LXXXV.¹

[The trifling squabbles of stage players ridiculed.]

5

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

I HAVE interested myself so long in all the concerns of this people, that I am almost become an Englishman; I now begin to read with pleasure of their taking towns or gaining battles, and secretly wish disappointment to all the enemies of Britain. Yet still my regard to mankind fills me with concern for their contentions. I could wish to see the disturbances of Europe once more amicably adjusted; I am an enemy to nothing in this good world but war; I hate fighting between rival states; I hate it between man and man; I hate fighting even between women!

10

15

I already informed you, that while Europe was at variance, we were also threatened from the stage with an irreconcilable opposition, and that our singing women were resolved to sing at each other to the end of the season.² O my friend, those fears were just. They are not only determined to sing at each other to the end of the season, but what is worse, to sing the same song, and what is still more insupportable, to make us pay for hearing.

20

If they be for war, for my part I should advise them to have a public congress, and there fairly squall at each other. What signifies sounding the trumpet of defiance at a distance, and calling in the town to fight their battles. I would have them come boldly into one of the most open and frequented streets, face to face, and there try their skill in quavering.

25

However this may be, resolved I am that they shall not touch one

30

¹ Though] 62; In a word, though *PL*

² here] 62; *om. PL* can] 62; now can *PL*

²² song] 62; song over and over *PL*

²³ for hearing] 62; them for hearing it *PL*

²⁹ quavering] 62; single combat *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 21 October 1760

² See Letter LXXIX, published three weeks earlier.

single piece of silver more of mine. Though I have ears for music, thanks to heaven they are not altogether asses ears. What! Polly and the Pick-pocket to-night, Polly and the Pick-pocket to-morrow night, and Polly and the Pick-pocket again; I want patience.¹ I'll
 5 hear no more. My soul is out of tune, all jarring discord, and confusion. Rest, rest, ye three dear clinking shillings in my pocket's bottom, the music you make is more harmonious to my spirits than cat-gut, rosin, or all the nightingales that ever chirruped in petticoats.

- 10 But what raises my indignation to the greatest degree, is that this piping does not only pester me on the stage, but is my punishment in private conversation. What is it to me, whether the *fine pipe* of one, or the *great manner* of the other be preferable, what care I if one has a better top, or the other a nobler bottom, how am I concerned if one
 15 sings from the stomach, or the other sings with a snap, yet paltry as these matters are, they make a subject of debate wherever I go, and this musical dispute, especially among the fair sex, almost always ends in a very unmusical altercation.

- Sure the spirit of contention is mixed into the very constitution
 20 of this people; divisions among the inhabitants of other countries arise only from their higher concerns, but subjects the most contemptible are made an affair of party here, the spirit is carried even into their amusements. The very ladies whose duty should seem to allay the impetuosity of the opposite sex, become themselves party
 25 champions, engage in the thickest of the fight, scold at each other,

9 petticoats] 62; buckram *PL*

13 one has] 62; one body has *PL*

15 from the stomach] 62; through the nose *PL*

paltry] 62; indifferent *PL*

20 this] *PL*; the 62

¹ *The Beggar's Opera* was performed the first time of the season at Drury Lane, with Mrs. Vincent as Polly and Mr. Lowe as Macheath, on 23 September; it was performed the following night at Covent Garden with Miss Brent as Polly and Mr. Beard as Macheath. It was repeated at Drury Lane 25 and 27 September and 2, 4, and 16 October and at Covent Garden 26 September and 11 and 21 October (all dates from the *Public Advertiser*). A writer in the *Public Ledger* for 24 September, who signs himself F. D., had shown his impatience in a copy of verses entitled 'On the Contention between the two Theatres for the *Beggar's Opera*', the substance of which appears in the following lines:

Zounds, 'tis plain to be seen, what is their intent,
 To cram us again with their *Vincent* and *Brent*.
 While *Shakespear* and *Otway* are kickt out of doors,
 And yield up the Stage to *Macheath* and his Whores.

and shew their courage, even at the expence of their lovers and their beauty.

There are even a numerous set of poets who help to keep up the contention, and write for the stage. Mistake me not, I don't mean pieces to be acted upon it, but panegyric verses on the performers, 5 for that is the most universal method of writing for the stage at present. It is the business of the stage-poet therefore to watch the appearance of every new player at his own house, and so come out next day with a flaunting copy of newspaper verses.¹ In these nature and the actor may be set to run races, the player always coming off 10 victorious; or nature may mistake him for herself, or old Shakespear may put on his winding-sheet and pay him a visit, or the tuneful nine may strike up their harps in his praise, or should it happen to be an actress, Venus the beauteous queen of love, and the naked graces are ever in waiting, the lady must be herself a goddess bred 15 and born; she must—but you shall have a specimen of one of these poems which may convey a more precise idea.

On seeing Mrs. ****, perform in the character of ****.

To you bright fair the nine address their lays,
And tune my feeble voice to sing thy praise. 20
The heart-felt power of every charm divine,
Who can withstand their all-commanding shine?
See how she moves along with every grace
While soul-brought tears steal down each shining face.
She speaks, 'tis rapture all and nameless bliss, 25
Ye gods what transport e'er compar'd to this.
As when in Paphian groves the queen of love,
With fond complaint address'd the listening Jove,
'Twas joy, and endless blisses all around,
And rocks forgot their hardness at the sound. 30
Then first, at last even Jove was taken in,
And felt her charms, without disguise, within.

7 the stage-poet] 62; a stage-poet *PL*

11 victorious; or] 62; victorious. Or *PL*

14 naked] 62; *om. PL*

17 these] 62; those *PL* convey] 62; give you *PL*

¹ Verses 'Written whilst Mrs. Vincent was performing the part of Polly' appear in the *Gazetteer and London Daily Advertiser* for 30 September and in the *London Chronicle* of the same date; lines 'Wrote Extempore by a young Lady on seeing Mr. Beard in the character of Captain Macheath' are in the *Public Ledger* for 18 October; and an 'Epigram' on Mrs. Vincent immediately follows this letter in the *Public Ledger*.

And yet think not, my friend, that I have any particular animosity against the champions who are at the head of the present commotion; on the contrary, I could find pleasure in their music, if served up at proper intervals; if I heard it only on proper occasions and not
 5 about it wherever I go. In fact, I could patronize them both, and as an instance of my condescension in this particular, they may come and give me a song at my lodgings, on any evening when I'm at leisure, provided they keep a becoming distance, and stand, while they continue to entertain me, with decent humility at the door.

- 10 You perceive I have not read the seventeen books of Chinese ceremonies to no purpose. I know the proper share of respect due to every rank in society. Stage players, fire eaters, singing women, dancing dogs, wild beasts, and wire walkers, as their efforts are exerted for our amusement, ought not *entirely* to be despised. The
 15 laws of every country should allow them to play their tricks at least with impunity. They should not be branded with the ignominious appellation of vagabonds; at least they deserve a rank in society equal to the mystery of barbers, or undertakers, and could my influence extend so far, they should be allowed to earn even forty
 20 or fifty pounds a year, if eminent in their profession.

I am sensible however that you will censure me of profusion in this respect, bred up as you are in the narrow prejudices of eastern frugality. You will undoubtedly assert, that such a stipend is too great for so useless an employment. Yet how will your surprize
 25 encrease, when told, that though the law holds them as vagabonds, many of them earn more than a thousand a year.¹ You are amazed. There is cause for amazement. A vagabond with a thousand a year

9 with decent humility] 62; politely *PL*

10 You perceive] 62; No, no, *PL*

11 to no purpose.] 62; for nothing, *PL*

14 ought not . . . be despised] 62; we ought not *entirely* to despise *PL*

17 vagabonds] 62; vagabonds. I am so very much a friend to the profession, that they should not be altogether considered in that despicable light *PL*

19 they should] 62; should *PL*

20 if] 62; provided they were *PL* their] 62; the *PL*

24 employment. Yet] 62; employment, yet *PL*

25 law] 62; law of this country *PL*

¹ Cf. 'On the Contradictions of the World. From Voltaire' in the *Bee*: 'How would he [an Asiatic] be surprised to find our actors stiled vagabonds by law, yet encouraged by the great, and kept company with as equals!' (above, I, p. 469). This is a very free translation of Voltaire.

is indeed a curiosity in nature; a wonder far surpassing the flying fish, petrified crab, or travelling lobster. However, from my great love to the profession, I would willingly have them divested of part of their contempt, and part of their finery, the law should kindly take them under the wing of protection, fix them into a corporation, like 5 that of the barbers, and abridge their ignominy and their pensions. As to their abilities in other respects, I would leave that entirely to the public, who are certainly in this case the properest judges—whether they despise them or no.

Yes, my Fum, I would abridge their pensions. A theatrical 10 warrior, who conducts the battles of the stage, should be cooped up with the same caution as a Bantam cock that is kept for fighting. When one of those animals is taken from its native dunghill, we retrench it both in the quantity of its food, and the number of its seraglio; players should in the same manner be fed, not fattened, 15 they should be permitted to get their bread, but not eat the peoples bread into the bargain, and instead of being permitted to keep four mistresses, in conscience they should be contented only with two.

Were stage players thus brought into bounds, perhaps we should find their admirers less sanguine, and consequently less ridiculous in 20 patronizing them. We should no longer be struck with the absurdity of seeing the same people, whose valour makes such a figure abroad, apostrophizing in the praise of a bouncing blockhead, and wrangling in the defence of a copper tail'd actress at home.

I shall conclude my letter with the sensible admonition of *Mé* 25 the philosopher. 'You love harmony, says he, and are charmed with music. I do not blame you for hearing a fine voice, when you are in your closet with a lovely parterre under your eye, or in the night time while perhaps the moon diffuses her silver rays. But is a man to carry this passion so far as to let a company of comedians, musicians, 30 and singers, grow rich upon his exhausted fortune? If so he resembles one of those dead bodies, whose brains the embalmers have picked out through its ears.'¹ Adieu.

1 nature; a] 62; nature. A *PL*

9 despise] 62; ought to despise *PL*

13 those animals] 62; these animals you know *PL*

23 of a bouncing blockhead] 62; *om. PL*

25 *Mé*] 62, *Du Halde*; *Mé PL*

¹ The quotation, except the last sentence, is taken with small changes from *Du Halde*, ii. 57. It is not there ascribed to anyone, but '*the Philosopher Mé*' is quoted *ibid.*, p. 98.

LETTER LXXXVI.¹

[The races of New-market ridiculed. The description of a cart race.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

- 5 **O**F all the places of amusement where gentlemen and ladies are entertained, I have not been yet to visit Newmarket. This I am told is a large field, where upon certain occasions three or four horses are brought together, then set a running, and that horse which runs fastest wins the wager.
- 10 This is reckoned a very polite and fashionable amusement here, much more followed by the nobility than partridge fighting at Java, or paper kites in Madagascar, several of the great here, I am told, understand as much of farriery as their grooms, and a horse with any share of merit, can never want a patron among the nobility.
- 15 We have a description of this entertainment almost every day in some of the gazettes, as for instance;² "On such a day the Give and Take plate was run for between his Grace's Crab, his Lordship's Periwinkle, and 'Squire Smackem's Slamerkin. All rode their own horses. There was the greatest concourse of nobility that has been
- 20 known here for several seasons. The odds were in favour of Crab in the beginning, but Slamerkin, after the first heat seemed to have the match hollow; however, it was soon seen, that Periwinkle improved in wind, which at last turned out accordingly, Crab was run to a stand still, Slamerkin was knocked up, and Periwinkle was
- 25 brought in with universal applause." Thus you see Periwinkle received universal applause, and no doubt his Lordship came in for some share of that praise which was so liberally bestowed upon Periwinkle. Sun of China, how glorious must the Senator appear in his cap and leather breeches, his whip crossed in his mouth,

7 where] 62; on which *PL*

16 of the gazettes] 62; Gazette *PL*

20 here] 62; there *PL*

22 soon] 62; *om. PL*

23-24 Crab was . . . knocked up,] 62; *om. PL*

28 Periwinkle] 62; his horse *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 24 October 1760.

² Most of the newspapers, including the *Public Ledger* (see the numbers for 2, 3, 4, and 6 October), carried brief news of the Newmarket races, but I have seen no account resembling Goldsmith's parody.

and thus coming to the goal amongst the shouts of grooms, jockies, pimps, stable-bred Dukes, and degraded Generals!

From the description of this princely amusement, now transcribed, and from the great veneration I have for the characters of its principal promoters, I make no doubt but I shall look upon an horse-race with becoming reverence, predisposed as I am by a similar amusement, of which I have lately been a spectator; for just now I happened to have an opportunity of being present at a cart-race.

Whether this contention between three carts of different parishes was promoted by a subscription among the nobility, or whether the grand jury in council assembled, had gloriously combined to encourage plaustral¹ merit, I cannot take upon me to determine; but certain it is, the whole was conducted with the utmost regularity and decorum, and the company, which made a brilliant appearance, were universally of opinion, that the sport was high, the running fine, and the riders influenced by no bribe.

It was run on the road from London to a village called Brentford, between a turnip cart, a dust cart, and a dung cart; each of the owners condescending to mount and be his own driver.² The odds at starting were *dust* against *dung* five to four, but after half a mile's going, the knowing ones found themselves all on the wrong side, and it was turnip against the field, brass to silver.

Soon however the contest became more doubtful, turnip indeed kept the way, but it was perceived that dung had better bottom. The road re-echoed with the shouts of the spectators, dung against turnip, turnip against dung was now the universal cry; neck and neck, one rode lighter, but the other had more judgment. I could not but particularly observe the ardour with which the fair sex

6 predisposed as I am] 62; particularly as my mind has been predisposed *PL*

7-8 for just . . . to have] 62; just now having had *PL*

15-16 the running . . . no bribe] 62; and without any take in *PL*

22 brass to silver] 62; pence to half-pence *PL*

¹ In the *OED* this is the first use given of the word, and the only other is one by Ruskin in 1885. It is defined as 'Pertaining to a cart or wagon'.

² This account was probably suggested by a letter 'To John F——, the Magistrate' signed W. D. in the *Public Ledger* for 16 October 1760: '... in my rides from Brentford to the great city, which my business urges me to, twice or thrice a week, I never fail meeting (and often at the peril of my life or limbs) many of those brutes, riding races on their carts, in open defiance of the Law and Magistrate; yea verily, in the road before thine own dwelling, and near unto the King's palace, did mine eyes lately behold a three-fold contention of these carmen, as regardless of the Law, and as ambitious to win the race, as the keenest of their fellow-racers are at Newmarket.'

espoused the cause of the different riders on this occasion; one was charmed with the unwashed beauties of dung, another was captivated with the patibulary aspects of turnip; while in the mean time unfortunate gloomy dust, who came whipping behind was cheered by
 5 the encouragements of some, and pity of all.

The contention now continued for some time, without a possibility of determining to whom victory designed the prize. The winning post appeared in view, and he who drove the turnip cart assured himself of success; and successful he might have been, had
 10 his horse been as ambitious as he, but upon approaching a turn from the road which led homewards, the horse fairly stood still, and refused to move a foot farther. The dung cart had scarce time to enjoy this temporary triumph, when it was pitched headlong into a ditch by the way side, and the rider left to wallow in congenial
 15 mud. Dust in the mean time soon came up, and not being far from the post, came in amidst the shouts and acclamations of all the spectators, and greatly caressed by all the quality of Brentford. Fortune was kind only to one, who ought to have been favourable to all; each had peculiar merit, each laboured hard to earn the prize,
 20 and each richly deserved the cart he drove.

I do not know whether this description may not have anticipated that which I intended giving of Newmarket. I am told there is little else to be seen even there. There may be some minute differences in the dress of the spectators, but none at all in their under-
 25 standings; the quality of Brentford are as remarkable for politeness and delicacy, as the breeders of Newmarket. The quality of Brentford drive their own carts, and the honourable fraternity of Newmarket ride their own horses. In short, the matches in one place are as rational as those in the other, and it is more than probable, that
 30 turnips, dust, and dung, are all that can be found to furnish out description in either.

Forgive me my friend, but a person like me, bred up in a philosophic seclusion, is apt to regard, perhaps with too much asperity, those occurrences which sink man below his station in nature, and
 35 diminish the intrinsic value of humanity.

9 success; and] 62; success. And *PL*

16 post] 62; pool *PL* of all] 62; of *PL*

17 greatly] 62; was greatly *PL*

35 diminish] 62; thus diminish *PL*

LETTER LXXXVII.¹

[The folly of the Western parts of Europe, in employing the Russians to fight their battles.]

From Fum Hoam to Lien Chi Altangi.

YOU tell me the people of Europe are wise; but where lies their 5
wisdom? You say they are valiant too; yet I have some reasons
to doubt of their valour. They are engaged in war among each other,
yet apply to the Russians, their neighbours and ours, for assistance.
Cultivating such an alliance argues at once imprudence and timidity.
All subsidies paid for such an aid is strengthening the Russians, 10
already too powerful; and weakening the employers, already ex-
hausted by intestine commotions.

I cannot avoid beholding the Russian empire as the natural enemy
of the more western parts of Europe, as an enemy already possessed
of great strength, and, from the nature of the government, every 15
day threatening to become more powerful. This extensive empire,
which both in Europe and Asia occupies almost a third of the old
world, was, about two centuries ago, divided into separate kingdoms
and dukedoms, and from such a division consequently feeble. Since
the time however of Johan Basilides,² it has encreased in strength 20
and extent, and those untrodden forests, those innumerable savage
animals which formerly covered the face of the country, are now
removed, and colonies of mankind planted in their room. A kingdom
thus enjoying peace internally, possessed of an unbounded extent
of dominion, and learning the military art at the expence of others 25
abroad, must every day grow more powerful; and it is probable we
shall hear Russia in future times, as formerly, called the *Officina*
Gentium.

It was long the wish of Peter their great monarch to have a fort 30
in some of the western parts of Europe; many of his schemes and
treaties were directed to this end, but happily for Europe he failed

7 valour] 62; courage PL

10 such an aid] 62; aid from them PL

11 the employers] 62; themselves PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 31 October 1760.

² Goldsmith perhaps learned of Basilides from Voltaire's *Histoire de l'empire de Russie sous Pierre le Grand*, part i (1759), in *Œuvres complètes*, ed. Moland, xvi (Paris, 1878), 421, 426. Goldsmith borrowed from this work in writing Letter LXXXIX, which appeared three weeks later.

in them all. A fort in the power of this people would be like the possession of a flood-gate, and whenever ambition, interest, or necessity prompted they might then be able to deluge the whole western world with a barbarous inundation.

- 5 Believe me, my friend, I can't sufficiently condemn the politics¹ of Europe, who thus make this powerful people arbitrators in their quarrel. The Russians are now at that period between refinement and barbarity, which seems most adapted to military atchievement, and if once they happen to get footing in the western parts of
- 10 Europe, it is not the feeble efforts of the sons of effeminacy and dissention, that can serve to remove them. The fertile valley and soft climate will ever be sufficient inducements to draw whole myriads from their native desarts, the trackless wild, or snowy mountain.
- 15 History, experience, reason, nature, expand the book of wisdom before the eyes of mankind, but they will not read. We have seen with terror a winged phalanx of famished locusts each singly contemptible, but from multitude become hideous, cover like clouds the face of day, and threaten the whole world with ruin. We have
- 20 seen them settling on the fertile plains of India and Egypt, destroying in an instant the labours and the hopes of nations, sparing neither the fruit of the earth nor the verdure of the fields, and changing into a frightful desert, landscapes of once luxuriant beauty. We have seen myriads of ants issuing together from the southern
- 25 desert, like a torrent whose source was inexhaustible, succeeding each other without end, and renewing their destroyed forces, with unwearied perseverance, bringing desolation wherever they came, banishing men and animals, and when destitute of all subsistence, in heaps infecting the wilderness which they had made! Like these
- 30 have been the migrations of men. When as yet savage, and almost resembling their brute partners in the forest, subject like them only to the instincts of nature, and directed by hunger alone in the choice

3 might] 62; would *PL*

5 can't] *PL*; cannot 62

20-21 destroying] 62; destroy *PL*

23 beauty] 62; nature *PL*

24 together] 62; at once *PL*

29 wilderness which they had made] 62; desert air *PL*

32 instincts] 62; laws and even to the excesses *PL*

¹ Probably not a misprint but used with the old meaning of 'politicians'. The last recorded use with this meaning in *OED* is dated 1748.

of an abode, how have we seen whole armies starting, wild, at once from their forests and their dens; Goths, Huns, Vandals, Saracens, Turks, Tartars, myriads of men, animals in human form without country, without name, without laws, out-powering by numbers all opposition, ravaging cities, overturning empires, and after having destroyed whole nations, and spread extensive desolation, how have we seen them sink oppressed by some new enemy, more barbarous and even more unknown than they.¹ Adieu.

LETTER LXXXVIII.²

[The ladies advised to get husbands. A story to this purpose.]

10

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

AS the instruction of the fair sex in this country is entirely committed to the care of foreigners, as their language masters, music masters, hair frizzers, and governesses, are all from abroad, I had some intentions of opening a female academy myself, and made no doubt as I was quite a foreigner of meeting a favourable reception. 15

In this I intended to instruct the ladies in all the conjugal mysteries; wives should be taught the art of managing husbands, and maids the skill of properly chusing them; I would teach a wife how far she might venture to be sick without giving disgust, she should be acquainted with the great benefits of the cholic in the stomach, and all the thorough-bred insolence of fashion; maids should learn the secret of nicely distinguishing every competitor, they should be able to know the difference between a pedant and a scholar, a citizen and a prig, a squire and his horse, a beau and his monkey, 25

3 animals] 62; or rather animals *PL*

4 without laws] 62; or without laws *PL* out-powering] 62; overpowering *PL*

6 spread] 62; spreading *PL*

13 instruction] 62; institution *PL*

24 thorough-bred . . . of fashion] 62; rules for chusing a confident *PL*

¹ This paragraph with the exception of the first sentence is a rather free translation from the chapter 'Le Lièvre' in Buffon's *Histoire naturelle* (*Œuvres complètes du Buffon*, ed. A. Richard, xiv [Paris, 1825], 477-8). This source was pointed out by Miss Winifred Lynskey in her unpublished dissertation, *Goldsmith's Interest in Natural History*, 1759-1774 (Chicago, 1940).

² In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 14 November 1760.

but chiefly they should be taught the art of managing their smiles from the contemptuous simper to the long laborious laugh.

But I have discontinued the project, for what would signify teaching ladies the manner of governing or chusing husbands, when
 5 marriage is at present so much out of fashion, that a lady is very well off, who can get any husband at all. Celibacy now prevails in every rank of life,¹ the streets are crouded with old batchelors, and the houses with ladies who have refused good offers, and are never likely to receive any for the future.

10 The only advice therefore I could give the fair sex as things stand at present is to get husbands as fast as they can. There is certainly nothing in the whole creation, not even Babylon in ruins, more truly deplorable than a lady in the virgin bloom of sixty-three, or a battered unmarried beau, who squibs about from place to place,
 15 shewing his pig-tail wig and his ears. The one appears to my imagination in the form of a double night-cap or a roll of pomatum, the other in the shape of an electuary or a box of pills.

I would once more therefore advise the ladies to get husbands. I would desire them not to discard an old lover without very sufficient reasons, nor treat the new with ill nature till they know him
 20 false; let not prudes alledge the falseness of the sex, coquets, the pleasures of long courtship, or parents, the necessary preliminaries of penny for penny. I have reasons that would silence even a casuist in this particular. In the first place, therefore I divide the subject
 25 into fifteen heads, and then *sic argumentor*—but not to give you and myself the spleen, be contented at present with an Indian tale.

In a winding of the river Amidar, just before it falls into the Caspian sea, there lies an island unfrequented by the inhabitants of the Continent. In this seclusion blest with all that wild uncultivated
 30 nature could bestow, lived a princess and her two daughters. She

11 as fast as they can] 62; *om. PL*

12 ruins] 62; ruins excepted *PL*

18 therefore] 62; *om. PL*

20 nor] 62; and *PL*

20-21 till they know him false] 62; *om. PL*

21 alledge] 62; tell me, of *PL*

21-22 the pleasures] 62; of the pleasures *PL*

22 the necessary] 62; of the necessary *PL*

26 be contented . . . with an] 62; I'll be content at present with telling you an improbable *PL*

had been wrecked upon the coast while her children as yet were infants, who of consequence, though grown up, were entirely unacquainted with man. Yet unexperienced as the young ladies were in the opposite sex, both early discovered symptoms, the one of prudery, the other of being a coquet. The eldest was ever learning maxims of wisdom and discretion from her mamma, while the youngest employed all her hours in gazing at her own face in a neighbouring fountain. Their usual amusement in this solitude was fishing, their mother had taught them all the secrets of the art, she shewed them which were the most likely places to throw out the line, what baits were most proper for the various seasons, and the best manner to draw up the finny prey, when they had hooked it. In this manner they spent their time, easy and innocent, till one day, the Princess being indisposed, desired them to go and catch her a sturgeon or a shark for supper, which she fancied might sit easy on her stomach. The daughters obeyed, and clapping on a gold fish, the usual bait on those occasions, went and sate upon one of the rocks, letting the gilded hook glide down with the stream.

On the opposite shore, further down, at the mouth of the river, lived a diver for pearls, a youth, who, by long habit in his trade, was almost grown amphibious, so that he could remain whole hours at the bottom of the water, without ever fetching breath.¹ He happened to be at that very instant diving when the ladies were fishing with the gilded hook. Seeing therefore the bait which to him had the

2 who of . . . grown up,] 62; and they consequently *PL*

5 coquet. The] 62; coquet, the *PL*

8 neighbouring fountain] 62; muddy brook, which always reflects better than the glassy stream *PL* Their] *PL*; *par.* 62

11 seasons] 62; seasons, and different fish *PL*

13 one] 62; upon a certain *PL*

14 them] 62; the young Princesses *PL*

19 further] *PL*; farther 62

20-21 a youth . . . almost grown] 62; grown by long habit in his trade almost *PL*

¹ See the account of pearl-divers given by Le Comte, ii. 424: ' . . . les bons plongeurs durent ordinairement sous l'eau une demie heure; les autres n'y sont moins d'un bon quart d'heure; ils retiennent simplement leur haleine, sans se servir pour cela ni d'huile ni d'aucune autre liqueur; la coutume & la nature leur ayant donné cette force, que tout l'art des Philosophes n'a pû jusqu'icy nous communiquer.' The *Critical Review* for August 1759 (viii. 156) tells of two under-water prodigies: one a diver who 'used to pass whole days at sea; and it was quite equal to him, . . . whether he floated on the surface, or lay snug at the bottom'; the other a man who lived five years at sea, 'sometimes above, sometimes below water, and fed on fish like any other amphibious animal', until he was 'caught in a net, by fishermen'.

appearance of real gold, he was resolved to seize the prize, but both his hands being already filled with pearl oysters he found himself obliged to snap at it with his mouth: the consequence is easily imagined, the hook, before unperceived, was instantly fastened in his
 5 jaw, nor could he with all his efforts or his floundering get free.

Sister, cries the youngest Princess, I have certainly caught a monstrous fish, I never perceived any thing struggle so at the end of my line before; come and help me to draw it in. They both now therefore assisted in fishing up the Diver on shore, but nothing could
 10 equal their surprize upon seeing him. Bless my eyes, cries the prude, what have we got here, this is a very odd fish to be sure, I never saw any thing in my life look so queer, what eyes, what terrible claws, what a monstrous snout, I have read of this monster somewhere before, it certainly must be a Tanglang¹ that eats women, let us
 15 throw it back into the sea where we found it.

The diver in the mean time stood upon the beach, at the end of the line, with the hook in his mouth, using every art that he thought could best excite pity, and particularly looking extremely tender, which is usual in such circumstances. The coquet therefore in some
 20 measure influenced by the innocence of his looks, ventured to contradict her companion. "Upon my word sister, says she, I see nothing in the animal so very terrible as you are pleased to apprehend; I think it may serve well enough for a change. Always sharks, and sturgeons, and lobsters, and crawfish make me quite sick. I fancy
 25 a slice of this nicely grilladed and dressed up with shrimp sauce would be very pretty eating. I fancy mamma would like a bit with pickles above all things in the world; and if it should not sit easy on her stomach, it will be time enough to discontinue it when found disagreeable, you know." "Horrid, cries the prude, would the girl

1 real] 62; *om. PL*

7 my] 62; the *PL*

12 queer] 62; hideous *PL*

14 let] 62; quickly let *PL*

18 particularly] 62; *om. PL*

18-19 tender, which . . . such circumstances] 62; tender *PL*

21 companion] 62; companions advice *PL*

23 change. Always] 62; change, always *PL*

25 nicely grilladed] 62; barbecued *PL*

26-29 I fancy mamma . . . you know.] 62; *om. PL*

¹ The name comes from Du Halde, ii. 600, where the '*Tang lang*' is 'An Insect which eats the Grasshoppers'.

be poisoned; I tell you its a Tanlang, I have read of it in twenty places. It is every where described as the most pernicious animal that ever infested the ocean. I am certain it is the most insidious, ravenous creature in the world; and is certain destruction if taken internally." The youngest sister was now therefore obliged to submit: both assisted in drawing the hook with some violence from the diver's jaw, and he finding himself at liberty, bent his breast against the broad wave and disappeared in an instant.

Just at this juncture the mother came down to the beach to know the cause of her daughters delay; they told her every circumstance, describing the monster they had caught. The old lady was one of the most discreet women in the world; she was called the black-eyed Princess, from two black eyes she had received in her youth, being a little addicted to boxing in her liquor. "Alas, my children, cries she, what have you done? the fish you caught was a man-fish; one of the most tame domestic animals in the world. We could have let him run and play about the garden, and he would have been twenty times more entertaining than our squirrel or monkey." "If that be all, says the young coquet, we'll fish for him again. If that be all, I'll hold three tooth-picks to one pound of snuff, I catch him whenever I please." Accordingly they threw in their line once more, but with all their gilding, and padling, and assiduity, they could never after catch the diver. In this state of solitude and disappointment they continued for many years still fishing but without success, till at last the genius of the place in pity to their distresses, changed the prude into a shrimp, and the coquet into an oyster. Adieu.

1 its] *PL*; it is 62

2 places. It] 62; places, and it *PL*

3-5 I am . . . taken internally.] 62; *om. PL*

11 describing] 62; and described *PL*

14 liquor] 62; drink *PL*

15 man-fish; one] 62; man-fish. One *PL*

18 our squirrel or] 62; your squirrel, or your *PL*

19 we'll] *PL*; we will 62

19-21 If that be all, I'll . . . I please.] 62; *om. PL*

22 gilding, and padling,] 62; gilding *PL*

23 the diver] 62; a diver *PL*

24 but] 62; *om. PL*

25 distresses] 62; distress *PL*

LETTER LXXXIX.¹

[The folly of remote or useless disquisitions among the learned.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

5 I AM amused, my dear Fum, with the labours of some of the learned here. One shall write you a whole folio on the dissection of a caterpillar. Another shall swell his works with a description of the plumage on the wing of a butterfly; a third shall see a little world on a peach leaf, and publish a book to describe what his
10 readers might see more clearly in two minutes only by being furnished with eyes and a microscope.

I have frequently compared the understandings of such men to their own glasses.² Their field of vision is too contracted to take in the whole of any but minute objects, they view all nature bit by bit,
15 now the proboscis, now the antennæ, now the pinnæ of—a flea. Now the polypus comes to breakfast upon a worm, now it is kept up to see how long it will live without eating; now it is turned inside outward, and now it sickens and dies. Thus they proceed laborious in trifles, constant in experiment, without one single abstraction by
20 which alone knowledge may be properly said to encrease; till, at last, their ideas ever employed upon minute things contract to the size of the diminutive object, and a single mite shall fill their whole mind's capacity.

Yet believe me, my friend, ridiculous as these men are to the
25 world, they are set up as objects of esteem for each other. They have particular places appointed for their meetings; in which one shews his cockle-shell, and is praised by all the society; another produces his powder, makes some experiments that result in nothing, and comes off with admiration and applause; a third comes out with

9 publish] 62; publishes *PL*

11 a microscope] 62; proper glasses *PL*

13 glasses] 62; microscopes *PL*

20–21 till, at last,] 62; *om. PL*

22 and] 62; and at length *PL*

28 powder] 62; powder of Platina *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 21 November 1760.

² Cf. Goldsmith's reference in the essay 'On the Instability of Worldly Grandeur' in the *Bee* to 'the puny pedant, who finds one undiscovered property in the polype, or describes an unheeded process in the skeleton of a mole, and whose mind, like his microscope, perceives nature only in detail' (above, I, p. 472).

the important discovery of some new process in the skeleton of a mole, and is set down as the accurate and sensible; while one still more fortunate than the rest, by pickling, potting, and preserving monsters, rises into unbounded reputation.

The labours of such men, instead of being calculated to amuse 5 the public, are laid out only in diverting each other. The world becomes very little the better or the wiser, for knowing what is the peculiar food of an insect that is itself the food of another, which in its turn is eaten by a third; but there are men who have studied themselves into an habit of investigating and admiring such minutiae. 10 To these such subjects are pleasing, as there are some who contentedly spend whole days in endeavouring to solve ænigmas, or disentangle the puzzling sticks of children.

But of all the learned, those who pretend to investigate remote antiquity, have least to plead in their own defence when they carry 15 this passion to a faulty excess. They are generally found to supply by conjecture the want of record, and then by perseverance are wrought up into a confidence of the truth of opinions which even to themselves at first appeared founded only in imagination. The Europeans have heard much of the kingdom of China; its politeness, 20 arts, commerce, laws, and morals, are, however, but very imperfectly known among them. They have even now in their Indian warehouse numberless utensils, plants, minerals, and machines, of the use of which they are intirely ignorant; nor can any among them even make a probable guess for what they might have been designed.¹ Yet 25 though this people be so ignorant of the present real state of China,

4 unbounded reputation] 62; an unbounded share of fame *PL*

6 public,] 62; public, (for to more than amusement such cannot pretend) *PL*

10-11 minutiae. To these] 62; minutiae, and to those alone *PL*

11 some] 62; others *PL*

16 They are . . . found to] 62; When they *PL*

19 founded only in] 62; a vain *PL* The] 62; To give you an instance of what I mean: The *PL*; *par.* 62

¹ Cf. the essay 'Improvements and Discoveries that might attend a more extensive Knowledge of remote Countries' in the *Weekly Magazine* for 12 January 1760, pp. 54-55: 'We have at present lying by among the stores of the East-India company, an infinite number of materials, utensils, goods and commodities, with which we are utterly unacquainted, and know no manner of use to which they can be converted; all these, however, have answered some purpose of pleasure or convenience in the country from whence they were brought; is not this a manifest instance how little we know of those places?' Goldsmith contributed to this number of the *Weekly Magazine*, and this paper may even be his.

the philosophers I am describing have entered into long, learned, laborious disputes about what China was two thousand years ago. China and European happiness are but little connected even at this day; but European happiness and China two thousand years ago
 5 have certainly no connection at all. However, the learned have written on and pursued the subject through all the labyrinths of antiquity; though the early dews and the tainted gale be passed away, though no footsteps remain to direct the doubtful chace, yet still they run forward, open upon the uncertain scent, and though
 10 in fact they follow nothing, are earnest in the pursuit. In this chace however they all take different ways. One,¹ for example, confidently assures us, that China was peopled by a colony from Egypt. Sesostris, he observes, led his army as far as the Ganges, therefore if he went so far, he might still have gone as far as China, which is but about
 15 a thousand miles from thence, therefore he did go to China, therefore China was not peopled before he went there, therefore it was peopled by him. Besides, the Egyptians have pyramids, the Chinese have in like manner their porcelane tower;² the Egyptians used to light up candles upon every rejoicing, the Chinese have lanthorns
 20 upon the same occasion; the Egyptians had their great river, so have the Chinese; but what serves to put the matter past a doubt is, that the ancient Kings of China and those of Egypt were called by the same names. The Emperor Ki is certainly the same with King Atoes, for if we only change *K* into *A*, and *i* into *toes*, we shall have
 25 the name Atoes; and with equal ease *Menes* may be proved to be the same with the Emperor *Yu*, therefore the Chinese are a colony from Egypt.

But another of the learned is entirely different from the last, and

1 the philosophers I am describing] 62; they *PL*

6 written on and] 62; written about it, have *PL*

7 antiquity;] 62; antiquity, and *PL*

11 One] 62; One of the learned *PL*

¹ From this point to the end of the paragraph (with the exception noted below) Goldsmith is making a fairly close translation of a passage in the preface of Voltaire's *Histoire de l'empire de Russie sous Pierre le Grand*, in *Œuvres complètes*, ed. Moland, xvi (Paris, 1878), 381-2. See J. E. Brown in *Modern Philology*, xxiii (1926), 277-8.

² There is no original in Voltaire for the sentence to this point. But see Goldsmith's 'A Comparative View of Races and Nations', published in the *Royal Magazine* earlier in the year: 'He [an ingenious French writer] takes in the first place some pains to prove, that the Chinese are originally a colony of the ancient Egyptians. . . . This he proves from the similitude of their manners, their methods of communicating their ideas by writing, their pyramids, and some other striking similitudes' (below, III, pp. 76-77).

he will have the Chinese to be a colony planted by Noah just after the deluge.¹ First from the vast similitude there is between the name of Fohi, the founder of the Chinese monarchy, and that of Noah the preserver of the human race: Noah, Fohi, very like each other truly, they have each but four letters, and only two of the four 5 happen to differ. But to strengthen the argument, Fohi, as the Chinese chronicle asserts, had no father. Noah it is true had a father, as the European Bible tells us; but then as his father was probably drown'd in the flood, it is just the same as if he had no father at all, therefore Noah and Fohi are the same. Just after the 10 flood the earth was covered with mud, if it was covered with mud it must have been incrustated mud; if it was incrustated, it was cloathed with verdure, this was a fine unembarrassed road for Noah to fly from his wicked children, he therefore did fly from them, and took a journey of two thousand miles for his own amusement; there- 15 fore Noah and Fohi are the same. Another sect of literati, for they all pass among the vulgar for very great scholars, assert, that the Chinese came neither from the colony of Sesostris, nor from Noah, but are descended from Magog, Meshech and Tubal, and therefore neither Sesostris, nor Noah, nor Fohi are the same. It is thus, my 20 friend, that indolence assumes the airs of wisdom, and while it tosses the cup and ball with infantine folly, desires the world to look on, and calls the stupid pastime, philosophy and learning. Adieu.

12 been incrustated] 62; been hard incrustated *PL*

15-16 amusement; therefore] 62; amusement. Therefore *PL*

16 Another] *PL*; *par.* 62

20 the same] 62; then true *PL* It] *PL*; *par.* 62

21 the airs] 62; an air *PL*

¹ See 'An Account of an Essay to prove that the Chinese are an Egyptian Colony, written in French by M. de Guignes, Member of the Royal Academy of Belles Letters', in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for October 1759 (xxix. 463): 'Several persons of great learning have heretofore suspected that the conquests of *Osiris* and *Sesostris* carried many *Egyptians* into *India* and *China*. M. *Huet*, in particular, supposed that colonies from *Egypt* had passed into *China*; but some of the *British* literati have from the same premises drawn a contrary conclusion, for having like him been struck with the conformity between the *Chinese* and *Egyptian* customs, they have supposed that *Noah* retiring into *China*, after the deluge, the arts and sciences passed from thence into *Egypt*.' Du Halde, i. 639, and Le Comte, i. 207, have *China* peopled by the immediate descendants of *Noah*. It is the philological argument in De Guignes's book that is the primary object of ridicule in the passage translated from Voltaire.

LETTER XC.¹

[The English subject to the spleen.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

5 **W**HEN the men of this country are once turned of thirty, they regularly retire every year at proper intervals to lie in of the *spleen*.² The vulgar unfurnished with the luxurious comforts of the soft cushion, down bed, and easy-chair, are obliged, when the fit is on them, to nurse it up by drinking, idleness, and ill-
10 humour. In such dispositions, unhappy is the foreigner who happens to cross them; his long chin, tarnished coat, or pinched hat, are sure to receive no quarter. If they meet no foreigner however to fight with, they are in such cases generally content with beating each other.

15 The rich, as they have more sensibility, are operated upon with greater violence by this disorder. Different from the poor, instead of becoming more insolent, they grow totally unfit for opposition. A General here, who would have faced a culverin when well, if the fit be on him, shall hardly find courage to snuff a candle. An Admiral,
20 who could have opposed a broadside without shrinking, shall sit whole days in his chamber, mobbed up in double night-caps, shuddering at the intrusive breeze, and distinguishable from his wife only by his black beard and heavy eye-brows.

In the country this disorder mostly attacks the fair sex, in town
25 it is most unfavourable to the men. A Lady, who has pined whole years amidst cooing doves, and complaining nightingales in rural retirement, shall resume all her vivacity in one night at a city gaming-table; her husband who roar'd, hunted, and got drunk at home, shall grow splenetic in town in proportion to his wife's good humour.
30 Upon their arrival in London, they exchange their disorders. In

12 foreigner] 62; foreigners *PL*

24 the country] 62; town *PL*

25 men] 62; softer sex *PL*

28 roar'd] 62; has roar'd *PL*

30 Upon] 62; Her disorders upon *PL* they exchange their disorders. In] 62; are transferred on him; in *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Wednesday, 17 December 1760.

² On the spleen see Oswald Doughty, 'The English Malady of the Eighteenth Century', *Review of English Studies*, ii (1926), 257-69, and Cecil A. Moore, 'The English Malady', in *Backgrounds of English Literature, 1700-1760* (Minneapolis, 1953).

consequence of her parties and excursions, he puts on the furred cap and scarlet stomacher, and perfectly resembles an Indian husband, who when his wife is safely delivered, permits her to transact business abroad, while he undergoes all the formality of keeping his bed, and receiving all the condolence in her place. 5

But those who reside constantly in town, owe this disorder mostly to the influence of the weather. It is impossible to describe what a variety of transmutations an east wind shall produce; it has been known to change a Lady of fashion into a parlour couch; an Alder- 10 man into a plate of custards, and a dispenser of justice into a rat trap. Even Philosophers themselves are not exempt from its influence; it has often converted a Poet into a coral and bells, and a patriot Senator into a dumb waiter.

Some days ago I went to visit the man in black, and entered his house with that cheerfulness, which the certainty of a favourable 15 reception always inspires. Upon opening the door of his apartment, I found him with the most rueful face imaginable in a morning gown and flannel night-cap, earnestly employed in learning to blow the German flute. Struck with the absurdity of a man in the decline 20 of life, thus blowing away all his constitution and spirits, even without the consolation of being musical; I ventured to ask what could induce him to attempt learning so difficult an instrument so late in life. To this he made no reply, but groaning, and still holding the flute to his lip, continued to gaze at me for some moments very 25 angrily, and then proceeded to practise his gammut as before. After having produced a variety of the most hideous tones in nature; at last turning to me, he demanded, whether I did not think he had made a surprizing progress in two days? You see, continues he, I have got the Ambusheer¹ already, and as for fingering, my master

2-3 Indian husband] 62; husband of Congo *PL*

4 business abroad] 62; the out-door business *PL*

5 condolence] 62; compliments of congratulation *PL*

10 plate of custards] 62; minced pye *PL*

12-13 a Poet . . . dumb waiter] 62; an Algebraist into a Broker, and an Anatomist into a City-carver *PL*

18 gown and . . . night-cap] 62; gown, a flannel night-cap, with ears tied under his chin *PL*

20-21 even without] 62; without even *PL*

24 very] 62; *om. PL*

28 You] 62; For you *PL*

¹ A variant spelling of 'embouchure'.

tells me, I shall have that in a few lessons more. I was so much astonished with this instance of inverted ambition, that I knew not what to reply, but soon discerned the cause of all his absurdities; my friend was under a metamorphosis by the power of spleen, and
 5 flute blowing was unluckily become his adventitious passion.

In order therefore to banish his anxiety imperceptibly, by seeming to indulge it, I began to descant on those gloomy topics by which Philosophers often get rid of their own spleen, by communicating it; the wretchedness of man in this life, the happiness of some
 10 wrought out of the miseries of others, the necessity that wretches should expire under punishment, that rogues might enjoy affluence in tranquility; I led him on from the inhumanity of the rich to the ingratitude of the beggar; from the insincerity of refinement to the fierceness of rusticity; and at last had the good fortune to restore
 15 him to his usual serenity of temper, by permitting him to expatiate upon all the modes of human misery.

"Some nights ago, says my friend, sitting alone by my fire; I happened to look into an account of the detection of a set of men called the thieftakers. I read over the many hideous cruelties of
 20 those haters of mankind, of their pretended friendship to wretches they meant to betray, of their sending men out to rob and then hanging them. I could not avoid sometimes interrupting the narrative by crying out, *Yet these are men!* As I went on I was informed that they had lived by this practice several years, and had been
 25 enriched by the price of blood; *and yet, cried I, I have been sent into this world, and am desired to call these men my brothers;* I read that the very man who led the condemned wretch to the gallows, was he who falsely swore his life away; *and yet, continued I, that perjurer had just such a nose, such lips, such hands and such eyes as Newton.*
 30 I at last came to the account of the wretch that was searched after

4 my friend . . . spleen, and] 62; for seeing him examine the colour of his tongue at the glass, I found my friend under a violent fit of the spleen, and that PL

9 it] 62; it to others PL some] 62; the great being PL

10 others] 62; the poor PL that wretches] 62; there was that some PL

11 rogues] 62; others PL

14 rusticity] 62; savage rusticity PL

16 misery.] 62; misery. Even at last he was so far master of himself as to describe his own situation under the disorder in which I found him. PL

19 the thieftakers] 62; thieftakers PL

19-21 cruelties of . . . to betray,] 62; instances PL

28 falsely swore] 62; had falsely sworn PL continued I] 62; cried I PL

29 such eyes] 62; eyes PL

robbing one of the thieftakers of half a crown. Those of the confederacy knew that he had got but that single half crown in the world; after a long search therefore, which they knew would be fruitless, and taking from him the half crown, which they knew was all he had, one of the gang compassionately cried out, *alas poor creature* 5 *let him keep all the rest he has got, it will do him service in Newgate, where we are sending him.*¹ This was an instance of such complicated guilt and hypocrisy, that I threw down the book in an agony of rage, and began to think with malice of all the human kind. I sate silent for some minutes, and soon perceiving the ticking of my watch beginning to grow noisy and troublesome, I quickly placed it out of hearing; and strove to resume my serenity. But the watch- 10 man soon gave me a second alarm. I had scarcely recovered from this, when my peace was assaulted by the wind at my window; and when that ceased to blow, I listened for death-watches in the wain- 15 scot. I now found my whole system discomposed, I strove to find a resource in philosophy and reason; but what could I oppose, or where direct my blow, when I could see no enemy to combat. I saw no misery approaching, nor knew any I had to fear, yet still I was miserable. Morning came, I sought for tranquility in dissipation, sauntered from one place of public resort to another, but 20 found myself disagreeable to my acquaintance, and ridiculous to

3 after] 62; yet pretended to believe that he had more. After PL fruitless] 62; vain PL

4 they knew was] 62; was PL

7 we are sending him] 62; he is going PL

9 with malice] 62; maliciously PL kind] 62; race PL

10 perceiving] 62; perceived PL

12 out of hearing] 62; where it was impossible to hear it PL serenity. But] 62; serenity of temper, but PL

13-16 I had . . . the wainscot.] 62; om. PL

16 I strove] 62; strove PL

18 combat.] 62; combat; PL

22 acquaintance] 62; friends PL

¹ The book the Man in Black has been reading is Joseph Cox's *A Faithful Narrative of the Most Wicked and Inhuman Transactions of that Bloody-minded Gang of Thieftakers alias Thief-makers . . . Shewing the Diabolical Arts by Them Practised, to Get Innocent Persons Convicted for Robberies, and to Share amongst Themselves the Rewards Paid for Such Convictions*, published at London in 1756 (my reference is to the Dublin edition of the same year). Here the thief-takers accuse the thieves of stealing a guinea in addition to the half-crown that really was stolen; and, Cox says, 'Going along the road, Macdaniel [one of the thief-takers] seemed to pity the lads, and said one of them has money in his stockings, but continued he, let them keep it, poor things, they will want it' (p. 30).

others. I tried at different times dancing, fencing, and riding, I solved geometrical problems, shaped tobacco-stoppers, wrote verses and cut paper. At last I placed my affections on music, and find, that earnest employment if it cannot cure, at least will palliate every anxiety." Adieu.

LETTER XCI.¹

[The influence of climate and soil upon the tempers and dispositions of the English.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

IT is no unpleasing contemplation to consider the influence which soil and climate have upon the disposition of the inhabitants, the animals and vegetables of different countries.² That among the brute creation is much more visible than in man, and that in vegetables more than either. In some places those plants which are entirely poisonous at home lose this deleterious quality by being carried abroad; there are serpents in Macedonia so harmless as to be used as play-things for children,³ and we are told that in some parts of Fez there are lions so very timorous as to be scared away, though coming in herds, by the cries of women.⁴

I know of no country where the influence of climate and soil is

¹ others] 62; my enemies *PL*

¹⁻³ I tried . . . cut paper.] 62; *om. PL*

³ find] 62; now find *PL*

⁵ every anxiety] 62; all our anxieties *PL*

¹⁷ abroad;] 62; abroad, as in the *Manzana Persica* for instance. If we may credit *Lucian PL*

²⁰ by] 62; merely by *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Monday, 17 November 1760.

² In the *British Magazine* for May 1760 Goldsmith had published an essay entitled 'The Effect which Climates have upon Men, and Other Animals' (below, III, p. 112).

³ As is suggested by the newspaper version (see the textual note), this part of the sentence is from *Lucian* (the *Alexander* 7).

⁴ Perhaps the last part of this sentence was suggested by Buffon's account of the lion in the *Histoire naturelle*: 'Les lions . . . qui habitent aux environs des villes et des bourgades de l'Inde et de la Barbarie, ayant connu l'homme et la force de ses armes, ont perdu leur courage au point d'obéir à sa voix menaçante, de n'oser l'attaquer, . . . et enfin de s'enfuir en se laissant poursuivre par des femmes ou par des enfants, qui leur font, à coups de bâton, quitter prise et lâcher indignement leur proie' (*Œuvres complètes*, ed. A. Richard, xvi [Paris, 1826], 5).

more visible than in England, the same hidden cause which gives courage to their dogs and cocks, gives also fierceness to their men.¹ But chiefly this ferocity appears among the vulgar. The polite of every country pretty nearly resemble each other. But as in simpleing, it is among the uncultivated productions of nature, we are to examine the characteristic differences of climate and soil, so in an estimate of the genius of the people, we must look among the sons of unpolished rusticity.² The vulgar English therefore may be easily distinguished from all the rest of the world, by superior pride, impatience, and a peculiar hardness of soul.

Perhaps no qualities in the world are more susceptible of a fine polish than these, artificial complaisance, and easy deference being superinduced over these, generally forms a great character, something at once elegant and majestic, affable yet sincere. Such in general are the better sort; but they who are left in primitive rudeness are the least disposed for society with others, or comfort internally, of any people under the sun.

The poor indeed of every country are but little prone to treat each other with tenderness, their own miseries are too apt to engross all their pity, and perhaps too they give but little commiseration as they find but little from others. But in England the poor treat each other upon every occasion, with more than savage animosity, and as if they were in a state of open war by nature. In China, if two porters should

2 their dogs] 62; the dogs *PL*

3 ferocity] 62; ferocity peculiar to the nation *PL*

4 other. But] 62; other, but *PL*

6-8 soil, so . . . unpolished rusticity] 62; soil *PL*

13 great] 62; fine *PL*

13-15 something at . . . better sort;] 62; *om. PL*

17 under the sun] 62; in the world *PL*

18 indeed] 62; *om. PL* prone] 62; apt *PL*

19-20 engross all their pity] 62; take up all that pity which might be bestowed elsewhere *PL*

21 others. But in England] 62; others; but in England particularly *PL*

22 with more . . . animosity, and] 62; *om. PL*

23 were] 62; were naturally *PL* by nature] 62; *om. PL*

¹ Goldsmith had spoken similarly of the English in 'A Comparative View of Races and Nations': 'If we regard some other animals which the country produces, and consider their impetuosity, their fierceness, their courage, and how they lose those qualities when they leave the soil, we shall be apt to attribute that impatience of servitude, which the English are so very remarkable for, to physical causes' (below, III, p. 86).

² Cf. the opening paragraph of 'Some Particulars Relative to Charles XII' in the *Bee*, No. II: 'The polite of every country seem to have but one character. . . . It is among the vulgar we are to find those distinctions which characterize a people. . . .'

meet in a narrow street, they would lay down their burthens, make a thousand excuses to each other for the accidental interruption, and beg pardon on their knees; if two men of the same occupation should meet here they would first begin to scold and at last to beat each other.¹ One would think they had miseries enough resulting from penury and labour not to encrease them by ill nature among themselves, and subjection to new penalties, but such considerations never weigh with them.

But to recompence this strange absurdity they are in the main generous, brave, and enterprising. They feel the slightest injuries with a degree of ungoverned impatience, but resist the greatest calamities with surprizing fortitude. Those miseries under which any other people in the world would sink, they have often shewed they were capable of enduring; if accidentally cast upon some desolate coast their perseverance is beyond what any other nation is capable of sustaining; if imprisoned for crimes their efforts to escape are greater than among others. The peculiar strength of their prisons, when compared to those elsewhere, argues their hardness; even the strongest prisons I have ever seen in other countries, would be very insufficient to confine the untameable spirit of an Englishman. In short what man dares do in circumstances of danger, an Englishman will. His virtues seem to sleep in the calm, and are called out only to combat the kindred storm.

5 they had] 62; that they had *PL*

7-8 penalties, but . . . with them] 62; penalties *PL*

9 main] 62; mean *PL*

10 enterprising] 62; enterprising above all others *PL*

14 enduring] 62; sustaining *PL*

16 crimes] 62; crime *PL*

17 The] 62; A manifest proof of this is the *PL*

18 elsewhere, argues their hardness] 62; elsewhere *PL*

20 untameable] 62; daring *PL*

22-23 virtues seem . . . kindred storm] 62; virtue seem rather formed for admiration than love *PL*

¹ This sentence was probably suggested by Voltaire's account of the Chinese in *Essai sur les mœurs*, chap. i: 'Des missionnaires racontent que souvent, dans les marchés publics, au milieu de ces embarras et de ces confusions qui excitent dans nos contrées des clameurs si barbares et des emportements si fréquents et si odieux, ils ont vu les paysans se mettre à genoux les uns devant les autres, selon la coutume du pays, se demander pardon de l'embarras dont chacun s'accusait, s'aider l'un l'autre, et débarasser tout avec tranquillité' (*Œuvres complètes*, ed. Moland, xi [Paris, 1878], 175). Cf. Du Halde, i. 278; but Goldsmith is closer to Voltaire, and he borrowed the sentence following the one quoted above in Letter LXXII. See J. E. Brown in *Modern Philology*, xxiii (1926), 280-1.

But the greatest eulogy of this people is the generosity of their miscreants, the tenderness in general of their robbers and highway-men. Perhaps no people can produce instances of the same kind, where the desperate mix pity with injustice; still shew that they understand a distinction in crimes, and even, in acts of violence, have 5 still some tincture of remaining virtue. In every other country robbery and murder go almost always together, here it seldom happens except upon ill-judged resistance or pursuit. The banditti of other countries are unmerciful to a supreme degree, the highway-man and robber here are generous at least to the public, and pretend 10 even to virtues in their intercourse among each other. Taking therefore my opinion of the English from the virtues and vices practised among the vulgar, they at once present to a stranger all their faults, and keep their virtues up only for the enquiring eye of a philosopher.

Foreigners are generally shocked at their insolence upon first 15 coming among them; they find themselves ridiculed and insulted in every street: they meet with none of those trifling civilities, so frequent elsewhere, which are instances of mutual good will without previous acquaintance; they travel through the country either too ignorant or too obstinate to cultivate a closer acquaintance, meet 20 every moment something to excite their disgust, and return home to characterise this as the region of spleen, insolence and ill-nature. In short, England would be the last place in the world I would travel to by way of amusement; but the first for instruction. I would chuse 25 to have others for my acquaintance, but Englishmen for my friends.

3 can] 62; could ever *PL*

3-4 kind, where] 62; kind. Where *PL*

4 still] 62; and even in acts of violence still *PL*

5-6 crimes, and . . . remaining virtue] 62; crimes *PL*

11 even] 62; *om. PL* each other] 62; themselves *PL*

14 for the . . . a philosopher] 62; to the times of trial *PL*

15 Foreigners are generally] 62; A foreigner is greatly *PL*

16 they find themselves] 62; he finds himself *PL*

17 they meet] 62; he meets *PL*

19 they travel] 62; he travels *PL*

20-21 meet every . . . their disgust,] 62; *om. PL*

21 return home] 62; returns to his own *PL*

23 short] 62; short, my friend *PL*

25 friends.] 62; friends. Adieu. *PL*

LETTER XCII.¹

[The manner in which some philosophers make artificial misery.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

5 THE mind is ever ingenious in making its own distress. The wandering beggar who has none to protect, to feed, or to shelter him, fancies complete happiness in labour and a full meal; take him from rags and want, feed, cloath, and employ him, his wishes now rise one step above his station, he could be happy were he possessed
10 of raiment, food, and ease. Suppose his wishes gratified even in these, his prospects widen as he ascends; he finds himself in affluence and tranquility indeed, but indolence soon breeds anxiety, and he desires not only to be freed from pain but to be possessed of pleasure; pleasure is granted him, and this but opens his soul to ambition,
15 and ambition will be sure to taint his future happiness either with jealousy, disappointment, or fatigue.

But of all the arts of distress found out by man for his own torment, perhaps that of philosophic misery is most truly ridiculous, a passion nowhere carried to so extravagant an excess as in the country
20 where I now reside. It is not enough to engage all the compassion of a philosopher here, that his own globe is harrassed with wars, pestilence, or barbarity, he shall grieve for the inhabitants of the moon, if the situation of her imaginary mountains happens to alter; and dread the extinction of the sun, if the spots on his surface happen
25 to encrease: one should imagine that philosophy was introduced to make men happy, but here it serves to make hundreds miserable.

My landlady some days ago brought me the diary of a philosopher of this desponding sort, who had lodged in the apartment before me. It contains the history of a life, which seems to be one continued
30 tissue of sorrow, apprehension, and distress. A single week will serve as a specimen of the whole.

Monday. In what a transient decaying situation are we placed, and what various reasons does philosophy furnish to make mankind unhappy! A single grain of mustard shall continue to produce its

16 disappointment, or fatigue] 62; fatigue, or disappo[i]ntment PL

29 a] 62; his PL

30-31 A single . . . the whole.] 62; I have sent a single week as a specimen. PL

34 mustard] 62; mustard-seed PL

similitude thro' numberless successions, yet what has been granted to this little seed has been denied to our planetary system; the mustard-seed is still unaltered, but the system is growing old, and must quickly fall to decay. How terrible will it be when the motions of all the planets have at last become so irregular as to need repairing, 5 when the moon shall fall into frightful paroxysms of alteration, when the earth deviating from its ancient track, and with every other planet forgetting its circular revolutions shall become so eccentric, that unconfined by the laws of system, it shall fly off into boundless space to knock against some distant world, or fall in upon the sun, 10 either extinguishing his light, or burned up by his flames in a moment. Perhaps while I write this dreadful change is begun. Shield me from universal ruin! Yet idiot man laughs, sings, and rejoices in the very face of the sun, and seems no way touched with his situation. 15

Tuesday. Went to bed in great distress, awaked and was comforted, by considering that this change was to happen at some indefinite time, and therefore, like death, the thoughts of it might easily be borne. But there is a revolution, a fixed determined revolution which must certainly come to pass, yet which by good fortune I shall never 20 feel except in my posterity. The obliquity of the equator with the ecliptic¹ is now twenty minutes less than when it was observed two

2 our planetary system] 62; the planetary system which we inhabit *PL*

3 the system] 62; our system *PL*

4 decay] 62; ruin *PL* terrible] 62; terrible, and indeed how piteous *PL*
be] 62; not be *PL*

6 when the moon] 62; and yet of this we are assured by the soundest philosophy;
the moon *PL* alteration, when] 62; aberration, *PL*

8 become] 62; soon become *PL*

10 the sun] 62; our sun *PL*

11-12 burned up . . . a moment] 62; supplying him with a scorching quantity of fuel *PL*

15 situation.] 62; situation. Well might the poet say:

Hunc solem & stellas

Et decedentia otii

Sidera temporibus

Sunt qui formidine nulla

Imbuti spectant—

which implies no more, than that a true philosopher should never see the sun, moon, and stars, without being frightened out of his wits. *PL*

¹ There was considerable contemporary interest in the question of whether the obliquity of the ecliptic was variable; see, for example, the *Gentleman's Magazine*, xxiv (1754), 219-20 (in this paper both 'Pitheat' and 'de Louville' are mentioned), and xxviii (1758), 67.

thousand years ago by *Piteas*. If this be the case in six thousand the obliquity will be still less by an whole degree. This being supposed, it is evident, that our earth, as Louville has clearly proved,¹ has a motion, by which the climates must necessarily change place, and
 5 in the space of about one million of years, England shall actually travel to the Antartic pole. I shudder at the change! How shall our unhappy grandchildren endure the hideous climate! A million of years will soon be accomplished, they are but a moment when compared to eternity, then shall our charming country, as I may say, in a
 10 moment of time resemble the hideous wilderness of Nova Zembla.

Wednesday. To night by my calculation the long-predicted comet is to make its first appearance. Heavens what terrors are impending over our little dim speck of earth! Dreadful visitation, are we to be scorched in its fires, or only smothered in the vapour of its tail, that
 15 is the question?² thoughtless mortals go build houses, plant orchards, purchase estates, for tomorrow you die. But what if the comet should not come? That would be equally fatal. Comets are servants which periodically return to supply the sun with fuel. If our sun therefore should be disappointed of the expected supply, and all his fuel be
 20 in the mean time burnt out, he must expire like an exhausted taper. What a miserable situation must our earth be in without his enlivening ray? Have we not seen several neighbouring suns entirely disappear, has not a fixed star near the tail of the Ram lately been quite extinguished?³

1 six thousand] 62; six thousand years *PL*

6 pole.] 62; pole: *PL*

9 then] 62; thus *PL*

10 Zembla] 62; Zembla; my portion of earth here is but small, however I could wish to leave it to my posterity, without being subject to such dreadful vicissitudes *PL*

20 an exhausted taper] 62; the snuff of a candle *PL*

24 extinguished?] 62; extinguished? And why may not our sun be extinguished in the same manner? On either side the prospect is fearful, I'll try to forget it in sleep. *PL*

¹ For a summary of De Louville's theories, published 'in the memoirs of the Royal Academy, for the year 1716', see Ephraim Chambers's *Cyclopaedia* (7th ed., 1751), art. 'Ecliptic'.

² The similarity between the discussion of comets here and that in *Gulliver's Travels*, bk. iii, chap. ii, has been noticed by previous editors.

³ Cf. the *Gentleman's Magazine* for October 1760 (xxx, 466): '... two very remarkably bright, yet short liv'd stars, have been seen, one in *Cassiopeia*, and the other in *Serpentarius*; which, breaking out at once with greater lustre than any other fixed stars, gradually faded, &c, changing to different colours, in about a year and a half, were no longer visible.'

Thursday. The comet has not yet appeared, I am sorry for it; first, sorry because my calculation is false; secondly, sorry lest the sun should want fuel; thirdly, sorry lest the wits should laugh at our erroneous predictions; and fourthly, sorry because if it appears to night it must necessarily come within the sphere of the earth's attraction, and heaven help the unhappy country on which it happens to fall. 5

Friday. Our whole society have been out all eager in search of the comet. We have seen not less than sixteen comets in different parts of the heavens. However we are unanimously resolved to fix upon one only to be the comet expected. That near Virgo wants nothing but a tail to fit it out completely for terrestrial admiration. 10

Saturday. The moon is I find at her old pranks. Her appulses, librations, and other irregularities indeed amaze me. My daughter too is this morning gone off with a grenadier. No way surprizing. I was never able to give her a relish for wisdom. She ever promised to be a mere expletive in the creation. But the moon, the moon gives me real uneasiness, I fondly fancied I had fixed her. I had thought her constant, and constant only to me; but every night discovers her infidelity, and proves me a desolate and abandoned lover. Adieu. 20

LETTER XCIII.¹

[The fondness of some, to admire the writings of lords, &c.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

IT is surprizing what an influence titles shall have upon the mind, even though these titles be of our own making. Like children we dress up the puppets in finery, and then stand in 25

2-3 lest the sun . . . want fuel] 62; for the sun *PL*

3-4 thirdly, sorry . . . erroneous predictions;] 62; *om. PL*

4 fourthly] 62; thirdly *PL*

8 all eager] 62; *om. PL*

10 heavens.] 62; heavens. Sixteen is rather too many. *PL*

11 comet] 62; real comet *PL*

11-12 That near . . . terrestrial admiration.] 62; I have observed the moon of late to be very irregular, she shall be watched to-night with more than usual assiduity. *PL*

15 surprizing.] 62; surprizing, as *PL*

16 wisdom. She ever promised] 62; wisdom, ever promising *PL*

20 desolate] 62; poor, despised, desolate *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Wednesday, 7 January 1761.

astonishment at the plastic wonder. I have been told of a rat-catcher here, who strolled for a long time about the villages near town, without finding any employment; at last, however, he thought proper to take the title of his Majesty's Rat-catcher in ordinary; and this
 5 succeeded beyond his expectations; when it was known that he caught rats at court all were ready to give him countenance and employment.

But of all the people, they who make books seem most perfectly sensible of the advantage of titular dignity. All seem convinced, that
 10 a book written by vulgar hands, can neither instruct nor improve; none but Kings, Chams, and Mandarins, can write with any probability of success. If the titles inform me right, not only Kings and Courtiers, but Emperors themselves in this country, periodically supply the press.

15 A man here who should write, and honestly confess that he wrote for bread, might as well send his manuscript to fire the baker's oven; not one creature will read him, all must be court bred poets, or pretend at least to be court bred, who can expect to please.¹ Should the Caitiff fairly avow a design of emptying our pockets and filling
 20 his own, every reader would instantly forsake him; even those who write for bread themselves, would combine to worry him, perfectly sensible that his attempts only served to take the bread out of their mouths.

And yet this silly prepossession the more amazes me, when I
 25 consider, that almost all the excellent productions in wit that have appeared here, were purely the offspring of necessity; their Drydens, Butlers, Otways, and Farquhars, were all writers for bread.² Believe me, my friend, hunger has a most amazing faculty of sharpening the genius;³ and he who with a full belly can think like a hero, after a
 30 course of fasting, shall rise to the sublimity of a demi-god.

8 the people] 62; people *PL*

18 please. Should] 62; please; should *PL*

20 own] 62; own belly *PL*

27 bread. Believe] 62; bread; believe *PL*

28 hunger] 62; that hunger *PL*

¹ Cf. Letter LVII.

² Cf. Letter LXXXIV.

³ Cf. the *Enquiry*: 'There can be nothing more just than the old observation, that authors, like running horses, should be fed but not fattened. If we would continue them in our service, we should reward them with a little money and a great deal of praise, still keeping their avarice subservient to their ambition' (above, I, p. 308).

But what will most amaze, is, that this very set of men, who are now so much depreciated by fools, are however the very best writers they have among them at present. For my own part, were I to buy an hat, I would not have it from a stocking-maker but an hatter; were I to buy shoes, I should not go to the taylor's for that purpose. It is just so with regard to wit; did I for my life desire to be well served, I would apply only to those who made it their trade, and lived by it. You smile at the oddity of my opinion; but be assured, my friend, that wit is in some measure mechanical, and that a man long habituated to catch at even its resemblance, will at last be happy enough to possess the substance; by a long habit of writing he acquires a justness of thinking, and a mastery of manner, which holiday writers, even with ten times his genius, may vainly attempt to equal.

How then are they deceived, who expect from title, dignity, and exterior circumstance, an excellence, which is in some measure acquired by habit, and sharpened by necessity; you have seen like me many literary reputations promoted by the influence of fashion, which have scarce survived the possessor; you have seen the poor hardly earn the little reputation they acquired, and their merit only acknowledged when they were incapable of enjoying the pleasures of popularity, such, however, is the reputation worth possessing, that which is hardly earned is hardly lost. Adieu.

LETTER XCIV.¹

[The philosopher's son is again separated from his beautiful companion.]

From Hingpo in Moscow, to Lien Chi Altangi in London.

WHERE will my disappointments end. Must I still be doomed to accuse the severity of my fortune, and shew my constancy in distress rather than moderation in prosperity. I had at least hopes of conveying my charming companion safe from the reach of every enemy, and of again restoring her to her native soil. But those hopes are now no more.

Upon leaving Terki, we took the nearest road to the dominions of Russia. We passed the Ural mountains covered in eternal snow,

5 purpose. It] 62; purpose; it *PL*

27 my fortune] 62; fortune *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Monday, 27 October 1760.

and traversed the forests of Ufa, where the prowling bear and shrieking hyena keep an undisputed possession. We next embarked upon the rapid river Bulija, and made the best of our way to the banks of the Wolga, where it waters the fruitful valleys of Casan.

- 5 There were two vessels in company properly equipped and armed in order to oppose the Wolga pyrates, who we were informed infested this river. Of all mankind these pyrates are the most terrible. They are composed of the criminals and outlawed peasants of Russia, who fly to the forests that lie along the banks of the Wolga for protection.
- 10 Here they join in parties, lead a savage life, and have no other subsistence but plunder. Being deprived of houses, friends, or a fixed habitation, they become more terrible even than the tyger, and as insensible to all the feelings of humanity. They neither give quarter to those they conquer, nor receive it when overpowered themselves.
- 15 The severity of the laws against them serves to encrease their barbarity, and seems to make them a neutral species of beings between the wildness of the lion and the subtilty of the man. When taken alive their punishment is hideous. A floating gibbet is erected, which is let run down with the stream, here upon an iron hook stuck under
- 20 their ribs, and upon which the whole weight of their body depends, they are left to expire in the most terrible agonies, some being thus found to linger several days successively.¹

7 They] 62; These *PL*

12 habitation] 62; subsistence *PL*

15 serves] *PL*; serve 62

16 seems] *PL*; seem 62

22 several] 62; for several *PL*

¹ This account of the pirates seems to have been derived from Jonas Hanway's *An Historical Account of the British Trade over the Caspian Sea*, pt. i, chap. xvi (1753), i. 104-6: 'Among vast numbers of common people [in Russia], it is not to be imagined, but . . . some of them will violate the law with regard to their passports; and being thus rendered obnoxious to punishment, the worst of them grow desperate; and . . . many to this day turn robbers by land and water, chusing the great rivers near vast tracts of uninhabited countries, where upon occasion they can the more easily escape. . . . These robbers often go in gangs of 30, 40, and sometimes 80 persons, in row-boats which carry from 20 to 30 hands: they equip themselves with fire-arms, and their general practice is to board immediately; but where a fierce resistance is apprehended, they seldom attack.'

' . . . these robbers have seldom any sentiments of humanity to a man of superior rank; but if he attempts to defend himself in hopes of bringing his people to the charge, he may be sure, if conquered, of being barbarously murdered. . . .

'As their cruelties are very great, so is the punishment inflicted on them when they are taken. A float is built, in size according to the number of the delinquents, and a gallows erected on it, to contain a sufficient number of iron hooks, on which they are

We were but three days voyage from the confluence of this river into the Wolga when we perceived at a distance behind us an armed barque coming up with the assistance of sails and oars in order to attack us. The dreadful signal of death was hung upon the mast, and our captain with his glass could easily discern them to be pyrates. It is impossible to express our consternation on this occasion; the whole crew instantly came together to consult the properest means of safety. It was therefore soon determined to send off our women and valuable commodities in one of our vessels, and that the men should stay in the other and boldly oppose the enemy. This resolution was soon put into execution, and I now reluctantly parted from the beautiful Zelis for the first time since our retreat from Persia. The vessel in which she was, disappeared to my longing eyes, in proportion as that of the pyrates approached us. They soon came up, but upon examining our strength, and perhaps sensible of the manner in which we had sent off our most valuable effects, they seemed more eager to pursue the vessel we had sent away than attack us. In this manner they continued to harrass us for three days, still endeavouring to pass us without fighting. But on the fourth day finding it entirely impossible, and despairing to seize the expected booty, they desisted from their endeavours, and left us to pursue our voyage without interruption.

Our joy on this occasion was great, but soon a disappointment more terrible, because unexpected, succeeded. The barque in which our women and treasure were sent off, was wrecked upon the banks of the Wolga, for want of a proper number of hands to manage her, and the whole crew carried by the peasants up the country. Of this however we were not sensible till our arrival at Moscow, where expecting to meet our separated barque,¹ we were informed of its misfortune, and our loss. Need I paint the situation of my mind on

8 therefore soon] 62; soon therefore *PL*

25 the banks] 62; one of the shores *PL*

30 on] 62; upon *PL*

hung alive by the ribs. The float is launched into the stream, with labels over their heads signifying their crimes. . . . These malefactors sometimes hang thus three, four, and some five days alive. The pain generally produces a raging fever, in which they utter the most horrid imprecations. . . .’ Since it is not clear that Goldsmith used Hanway’s book elsewhere as a source, he may have found this passage in the *London Magazine*, xxii (1753), 232–3, or translated from the *London Magazine* in the *Journal étranger* for June 1754, pp. 60–64.

¹ Moscow, of course, is not on the Volga. Similarly, the geography of the second paragraph of the letter appears to be largely Goldsmith’s invention.

this occasion. Need I describe all I feel, when I despair of beholding the beautiful Zelis more! Fancy had dressed the future prospect of my life in the gayest colouring, but one unexpected stroke of fortune has robbed it of every charm. Her dear idea mixes with every scene
 5 of pleasure, and without her presence to enliven it, the whole becomes tedious, insipid, insupportable. I will confess, now that she is lost; I will confess I loved her, nor is it in the power of time, or of reason to erase her image from my heart. Adieu.

LETTER XCV.¹

10 [The father consoles him upon this occasion.]

*From Lien Chi Altangi to Hingpo, at Moscom.**

YOUR misfortunes are mine. But as every period of life is marked with its own, you must learn to endure them. Disappointed love makes the misery of youth; disappointed ambition,
 15 that of manhood; and unsuccessful avarice, that of age. These three attack us through life, and it is our duty to stand upon our guard. To love, we ought to oppose dissipation, and an endeavour to change the object of the affections; to ambition, the happiness of indolence and obscurity, and to avarice, the fear of soon dying. These are the shields
 20 with which we should arm ourselves, and thus make every scene of life, if not pleasing, at least supportable.

* This letter is a rhapsody from The maxims of the philosopher Mé. Vide Lett. curieuse & edifiant. Vide etiam Du Halde, vol. ii. p. 98.²

1 all] 62; all that PL

12-13 But as . . . endure them.] 62; But you must learn to endure them. Every period of life is marked with its own. PL

14 youth] 62; our youth PL

17 an] PL; om. 62

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Wednesday, 29 October 1760.

² The second and third paragraphs of the letter are a close paraphrase of Du Halde, ii. 98, and the material in the second paragraph is ascribed to 'the *Philosopher Mé*'. The reference to 'Lett. curieuse & edifiant', however, is misleading. Twenty-eight volumes of the *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses, écrites des missions étrangères, par quelques missionnaires de la Compagnie de Jesus* had appeared by 1758 (the next volumes were not published until 1773), but they contain no 'maxims of the philosopher Mé'. Vol. xxvi (1743) has, in a letter from P. Parrenin, a 'Traduction de l'ouvrage d'un Auteur Chinois moderne, où il donne des règles de conduite propres à perfectionner les mœurs de ses Concitoyens' (pp. 86-145); but the author is Tchang, not Mé, and Goldsmith seems to have drawn nothing from it.

Men complain of not finding a place of repose. They are in the wrong, they have it for seeking. What they should indeed complain of is, that the heart is an enemy to that very repose they seek. To themselves alone should they impute their discontent. They seek within the short span of life, to satisfy a thousand desires, each of which alone is unsatiable. One month passes, and another comes on, the year ends and then begins, but man is still unchanging in folly, still blindly continuing in prejudice. To the wise man, every climate and every soil is pleasing; to him a parterre of flowers is the famous valley of gold; to him, a little brook, *the fountain of the young peach trees**; to such a man, the melody of birds is more ravishing than the harmony of a full concert, and the tincture of the cloud preferable to the touch of the finest pencil.

The life of man is a journey, a journey that must be travelled, however bad the roads or the accommodation. If in the beginning it is found dangerous, narrow and difficult, it must either grow better in the end, or we shall by custom learn to bear its inequality.

But though I see you incapable of penetrating into grand principles, attend at least to a simile adapted to every apprehension. I am mounted upon a wretched ass. I see another man before me upon a sprightly horse, at which I find some uneasiness. I look behind me and see numbers on foot stooping under heavy burdens, let me learn to pity their estate and thank heaven for my own.¹

Shingfu, when under misfortunes would in the beginning weep like a child, but he soon recovered his former tranquility. After indulging grief for a few days he would become, as usual, the most

* This passage the editor does not understand.²

2 have] 62; already have PL

3 the heart] 62; their heart PL

5 to satisfy] 62; a satisfaction of PL

5-6 each of which alone] 62; not one of which alone but PL

8 still blindly . . . in prejudice] 62; and still blindly continues the same PL

10-11 *the fountain . . . peach trees*]* 62; no italics or asterisk PL

12 concert] 62; concert of instruments PL

19 every] 62; your PL

25 recovered his former tranquility] 62; got over it PL

27 * This passage . . . not understand.] 62; om. PL

¹ This paragraph is from Du Halde, ii. 115-16.

² Cf. the note in Du Halde, ii. 98: 'We don't know what this Valley of Gold, and Fountain of young Peach-trees are.'

merry old man in all the province of Shansi. About the time that his wife died, his possessions were all consumed by fire, and his only son sold into captivity; Shingfu grieved for one day, and the next went to dance at a Mandarin's door for his dinner. The company were
 5 surprised to see the old man so merry when suffering such great losses, and the Mandarin himself coming out, asked him how he, who had grieved so much and given way to the calamity the day before, could now be so chearful? You ask me one question cries
 10 the old man, let me answer by asking another, which is more durable a hard thing, or a soft thing, that which resists or that which makes no resistance? *An hard thing to be sure*, replied the Mandarin. There you are wrong returned Shingfu. I am now fourscore years old; and if you look in my mouth you'll find that I have lost all my teeth, but not a bit of my tongue.¹ Adieu.

15

LETTER XCVI.²

[The condolance and congratulation upon the death of the late king ridiculed. English mourning described.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

20 **T**HE Manner of grieving for our departed friends in China, is very different from that of Europe. The mourning colour of Europe is black, that of China white. When a parent or relation dies here, for they seldom mourn for friends, it is only clapping on a suit of sables, grimacing it for a few days, and all, soon forgotten, goes on
 25 as before, not a single creature missing the deceased except perhaps a favourite house-keeper or a favourite cat.

On the contrary, with us in China it is a very serious affair. The

1 time] 62; same time PL

2 only son] 62; son, his only surviving friend, was PL

4 for his] 62; to earn his PL

8 one] 62; a PL

12 Shingfu.] 62; Shingfu; PL

13 you'll] PL; you will 62

26 house-keeper or a favourite cat] 62; cat or a favourite house-keeper PL

¹ Cf. Du Halde, ii. 115: 'The Emperor one Day ask'd *Shú hyang*, Which was most durable, a hard thing or a soft. *Sir*, answer'd *Shú hyang*, *I am fourscore Years of Age, and I have lost many of my Teeth, but none of my Tongue.*'

² In the *Public Ledger* for Wednesday, 5 November 1760.

piety with which I have seen you behave on one of these occasions should never be forgotten. I remember it was upon the death of thy grandmother's maiden sister. The coffin was exposed in the principal hall in public view.¹ Before it was placed the figures of eunuchs, horses, tortoises, and other animals, in attitudes of grief and respect.² 5 The more distant relations of the old lady, and I among the number, came to pay our compliments of condolence, and to salute the deceased after the manner of our country. We had scarce presented our wax candles and perfumes, and given the howl of departure, when crawling on his belly from under a curtain, out came the Reverend 10 Fum Hoam himself, in all the dismal solemnity of distress.³ Your looks were set for sorrow, your clothing consisted in an hempen bag tied round the neck with a string.⁴ For two long months did this mourning continue. By night you lay stretched on a single mat, and sate on the stool of discontent by day.⁵ Pious man, who could thus 15 set an example of sorrow and decorum to our country. Pious country, where if we do not grieve at the departure of our friends for their sakes, at least we are taught to regret them for our own.

13 months] 62; years *PL*

15 discontent] 62; discontentment *PL*

18 them] 62; it *PL*

¹ Cf. the account of mourning in China in Du Halde, i. 307: 'The Coffin is expos'd in the principal Hall, which is hung with white Stuffs . . . and other Ornaments of Mourning.'

² Ibid.: 'Near to it [the vault, not the coffin in the house] stands a large long Table of white polish'd Marble, whereon is a perfuming Pan, two Vessels and two Candle-sticks. . . . On each side are placed in several Rows a great many Figures of Officers, Eunuchs, Soldiers, Lions, Saddle-Horses, Camels, Tortoises, and other Animals in different Attitudes, discovering Signs of Grief and Veneration. . . .'

³ Ibid.: 'Those who come to make their Compliments of Condolence, salute the Deceas'd after the manner of their Country, prostrating themselves, and knocking their Foreheads several Times against the Ground, before the Table; on which they afterwards place Wax-Candles and Perfumes, brought with them according to Custom. Particular Friends accompany these Ceremonies with Tears and Groans, which may be often heard at a great Distance. While they are performing these Duties, the eldest Son, attended by his Brothers, comes from behind a Curtain, which is on one side of the Coffin, crawling on the Ground, his Face the very Picture of Grief it self, and shedding Tears, with a mournful and profound Silence.'

⁴ Ibid., p. 306: 'In the first Month after the Death of a Father or Mother, the Habit is a kind of hempen Sack of a bright red Colour, much like our packing Cloth; their Girdle is a sort of loose Cord. . . .'

⁵ Ibid., p. 307: 'Many *Chinese*, to give the greater Proof of their Respect and Tenderness for their deceased Fathers, keep their dead Bodies by them for three or four Years; and during the whole time of Mourning, their Seat in the Day is a Stool covered with white Serge; and in the Night they lie near the Coffin, on nothing but a Matt made of Reeds. . . .'

All is very different here, amazement all. What sort of a people am I got amongst! Fum, thou son of Fo, what sort of people am I got amongst! No crawling round the coffin, no dressing up in hempen bags, no lying on mats or sitting on stools. Gentlemen here shall put
 5 on first mourning with as sprightly an air as if preparing for a birth night, and widows shall actually dress for another husband in their weeds for the former. The best jest of all is, that our merry mourners clap bits of muslin on their sleeves, and these are called *weepers*. Weeping muslin, alas! alas! very sorrowful truly; these weepers then
 10 it seems are to bear the whole burthen of the distress.

But I have had the strongest instance of this contrast, this tragicomical behaviour in distress upon a recent occasion. Their King, whose departure, though sudden, was not unexpected, died after a reign of many years.¹ His age, and uncertain state of health, served
 15 in some measure to diminish the sorrow of his subjects, and their expectations from his successor seemed to balance their minds between uneasiness and satisfaction. But how ought they to have behaved on such an occasion? surely they ought rather to have endeavoured to testify their *gratitude* to their deceased friend, than
 20 to proclaim their *hopes* of the future.² Sure even the Successor must suppose their love to wear the face of adulation, which so quickly changed the object. However the very same day on which the old King died, they made rejoicings for the new.

4 stools. Gentlemen] 62; stools; gentlemen *PL*

8-9 *weepers*. Weeping] 62; *weepers*; weeping *PL*

12 occasion.] 62; occasion: *PL*

20 Successor] 62; Successor himself *PL*

21 their] 62; that *PL*

22 object] 62; object of its affections *PL*

¹ 'Whitehall, October 26, 1760. Yesterday in the Morning . . . our late most gracious Sovereign King George the Second was suddenly seized, at his Palace at Kensington, by a violent Disorder, . . . and soon expired. . . . His Majesty departed this Life in the 77th Year of his Age, and the 34th of his Reign . . .' (from the *Daily Advertiser* for 27 October 1760).

² For the kind of attitude being criticized see, for example, part of an address to the new king by the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, in *ibid.* for 29 October 1760: 'As your Majesty's Reign is so happily begun with the universal Approbation and Joy of the whole Nation, permit us, Great Sir, to express the high Sense we have of your Majesty's Virtues, by the strongest Assurances of our unalterable Zeal for your Majesty's Sacred Person and Government; being convinced that your Majesty has the true Interest of this Nation intirely at Heart, and that your Power will ever be exerted in protecting the Trade, Rights, and Liberties of your Subjects.'

For my part I have no conception of this new manner of mourning and rejoicing in a breath, of being merry and sad, of mixing a funeral procession with a jig, and a bonfire.¹ At least it would have been just, that they who flattered the King while living, for virtues which he had not, should lament him dead for those he really had. 5

In this universal cause for national distress, as I had no interest myself, so it is but natural to suppose I felt no real affliction. In all the losses of our friends, says an European philosopher, we first consider how much our own welfare is affected by their departure, and moderate our real grief just in the same proportion.² Now as I 10 had neither received nor expected to receive favours from Kings or their flatterers; as I had no acquaintance in particular with their late monarch, as I knew that the place of a King is soon supplied, and as the Chinese proverb has it, that though the world may sometimes want cobblers to mend their shoes, there is no danger of its wanting 15 Emperors to rule their kingdoms: from such considerations, I could bear the loss of a King with the most philosophic resignation. However I thought it my duty at least to appear sorrowful, to put on a melancholy aspect, or to set my face by that of the people.

The first company I came amongst after the news became general, 20 was a set of jolly companions who were drinking prosperity to the

19 to set] 62; at least to set *PL*

21 companions] 62; fellows *PL*

¹ See, for example, the account in *ibid.* for 3 November 1760 of the new king's being proclaimed in Southwark: 'Upon this Occasion a prodigious Concurrence of People attended, and express'd the highest Satisfaction. After the Ceremony was over, the Gentlemen returned to the Town-Hall, which was finely illuminated, where the Evening was spent with the greatest Harmony and Loyalty, and the Healths of his Majesty and the Royal Family were drank, and Bonfires made, and Wine and several Barrels of Beer were given to the Populace.'

² Cf. La Rochefoucauld, *Réflexions ou sentences et maximes morales*, no. xciv in the 1665 edition (suppressed in other early editions): 'Dans l'adversité de nos meilleurs amis, nous trouvons toujours quelque chose qui ne nous déplaît pas.' Swift quotes this maxim at the head of his *Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift*, and his paraphrase of it in lines 7-10 of the poem is closer to Goldsmith:

In all Distresses of our Friends
We first consult our private Ends,
While Nature kindly bent to ease us,
Points out some Circumstance to please us.

Cf. also La Rochefoucauld's Maxim no. ccxlviii in the edition of 1665 (ccxxiv in 1666, 1671, 1675): 'Nous ne regrettons pas toujours la perte de nos amis par la considération de leur mérite, mais par celle de nos besoins et de la bonne opinion qu'ils avoient de nous.'

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ensuing reign. I entered the room with looks of despair, and even expected applause for the superlative misery of my countenance. Instead of that I was universally condemned by the company for a grimacing son of a whore, and desired to take away my penitential
 5 phyz to some other quarter. I now corrected my former mistake, and with the most sprightly air imaginable entered a company, where they were talking over the ceremonies of the approaching funeral. Here I sate for some time with an air of pert vivacity; when one of the chief mourners immediately observing my good humour, de-
 10 sired me if I pleased to go and grin some where else, they wanted no disaffected scoundrels there. Leaving this company therefore, I was resolved to assume a look perfectly neutral, and have ever since been studying the fashionable air, something between jest and earnest, a complete virginity of face, uncontaminated with the
 15 smallest symptom of meaning.

But though grief be a very slight affair here, the mourning, my friend, is a very important concern. When an Emperor dies in China, the whole expence of the solemnities is defrayed from the royal coffers. When the great die here, Mandarines are ready enough
 20 to order mourning, but I do not see that they are so ready to pay for it. If they send me down from court the grey undress frock, or the black coat without pocket holes, I'm willing enough to comply with their commands,¹ and wear both, but, by the head of Confucius! to be obliged to wear black and buy it into the bargain, is more than my
 25 tranquility of temper can bear. What, order me to wear mourning before they know whether I can buy it or no!—Fum, thou son of Fo, what sort of a people am I got amongst, where being out of black is a certain symptom of poverty; where those who have miserable faces cannot have mourning, and those who have mourning will
 30 not wear a miserable face!

16 affair] 62; matter *PL*

22 I'm] *PL*; I am 62

30 face!] 62; face! Adieu. *PL*

¹ See the *Daily Advertiser* for 30 October 1760: 'Lord Chamberlain's Office, October 28, 1760. Orders for the Court to go into Mourning on Sunday next. . . .

'The Men to wear black Cloth, without Buttons on the Sleeves and Pockets, Plain Muslin or Long Lawn Cravats and Weapers, Shamoy Shoes and Gloves, Crape Hatbands, and black Swords and Buckles.

'Undress: Dark-Grey Frocks.'

LETTER XCVII.¹

[Almost every subject of literature, has been already exhausted.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

IT is usual for the booksellers here, when a book has given 5
universal pleasure upon one subject, to bring out several more
upon the same plan, which are sure to have purchasers and readers,
from that desire which all men have to view a pleasing object on
every side. The first performance serves rather to awake than satisfy
attention; and when that is once moved, the slightest effort serves to 10
continue its progression; the merit of the first diffuses a light suffi-
cient to illuminate the succeeding efforts; and no other subject can
be relished, till that is exhausted. A stupid work coming thus imme-
diately in the train of an applauded performance, weans the mind
from the object of its pleasure; and resembles the sponge thrust into 15
the mouth of a discharged culverin, in order to adapt it for a new
explosion.

This manner however of drawing off a subject, or a peculiar mode
of writing to the dregs, effectually precludes a revival of that subject
or manner for some time for the future; the sated reader turns from 20
it with a kind of literary nausea; and though the titles of books are
the part of them most read, yet he has scarce perseverance enough
to wade through the title-page.

Of this number I own myself one; I am now grown callous to
several subjects, and different kinds of composition: whether such 25
originally pleased, I will not take upon me to determine; but at
present I spurn a new book merely upon seeing its name in an
advertisement; nor have the smallest curiosity to look beyond the
first leaf, even though in the second the author promises his own face
neatly engraved on copper. 30

I am become a perfect Epicure in reading, plain beef or solid
mutton will never do. I'm for a Chinese dish of bear's claws and
bird's nests.² I am for sauce strong with assafoetida, or fuming with

14-15 weans the . . . its pleasure] 62; prepares the mind to be pleased upon different
topics PL

32 do.] 62; do; PL I'm] PL; I am 62 Chinese] 62; true Chinese PL

33 nests.] 62; nests, PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 7 November 1760.

² Cf. Letter XXXIII.

garlic. For this reason there are an hundred very wise, learned, virtuous, well intended productions, that have no charms for me. Thus, for the soul of me, I could never find courage nor grace enough to wade above two pages deep into *Thoughts upon God and Nature*, or
 5 *Thoughts upon Providence*, or *Thoughts upon free Grace*, or indeed into thoughts upon any thing at all. I can no longer meditate with Meditations for every day in the year; essays upon divers subjects can't allure me, though never so interesting; and as for funeral sermons, or even thanksgiving sermons, I can neither weep with
 10 the one, nor rejoice with the other.

But it is chiefly in gentle poetry, where I seldom look farther than the title. The truth is, I take up books to be told something new, but here as it is now managed the reader is told nothing. He opens the book, and there finds very good words, truly, and much exactness of
 15 rhyme, but no information.¹ A parcel of gaudy images pass on before his imagination like the figures in a dream, but curiosity, induction, reason, and the whole train of affections are fast asleep. The *jucunda et idonea vitæ*,² those sallies which mend the heart while they amuse the fancy, are quite forgotten; so that a reader who would take up
 20 some modern applauded performances of this kind, must, in order to be pleased, first leave his good sense behind him, take for his recompence and guide bloated and compound epithet, and dwell on paintings, just, indeed, because laboured with minute exactness.

If we examine, however, our internal sensations, we shall find
 25 ourselves but little pleased with such laboured vanities; we shall find that our applause rather proceeds from a kind of contagion caught up from others, and which we contribute to diffuse, than from what we privately feel. There are some subjects of which almost all the world perceive the futility, yet all combine in imposing upon
 30 each other, as worthy of praise. But chiefly this imposition obtains in literature, where men publicly condemn what they relish with

7 for] 62; upon *PL*

8 can't] *PL*; cannot 62

9-10 I can . . . the other] 62; the very sound gives me the spleen *PL*

¹ Cf. the review, quite possibly by Goldsmith, of *The Beldames: a Poem* in the *Critical Review* for February 1759 (vii. 173): 'So little improvement do we meet with in modern poetry, that it is now almost fallen into disrepute. . . . The reason of this change of taste in the public may be, that in modern poetry we merely study to amuse without conveying information; and have a chain of trite thoughts prettily ornamented running through many well-known performances: thus we admire the poet, without feeling his beauties.'

² Horace, *Ars poetica* 334.

rapture in private, and approve abroad what has given them disgust at home. The truth is, we deliver those criticisms in public which are supposed to be best calculated not to do justice to the author, but to impress others with an opinion of our superior discernment.¹

But let works of this kind, which have already come off with such 5
applause, enjoy it all. It is neither my wish to diminish, as I was never considerable enough to add to their fame. But for the future I fear there are many poems, of which I shall find spirits to read but the title. In the first place all odes upon winter, or summer, or autumn, in short all odes, epodes, and monodies whatsoever, shall 10
hereafter be deemed too polite, classical, obscure, and refined, to be read, and entirely above human comprehension. Pastorals are pretty enough—for those that like them,—but to me Thyrsis is one of the most insipid fellows I ever conversed with; and as for Corridon I don't chuse his company. Elegies and epistles are very fine to those 15
to whom they are addressed; and as for epic poems, I am generally able to discover the whole plan in reading the two first pages.

Tragedies however, as they are now made, are good instructive moral *sermons* enough, and it would be a fault not to be pleased with 20
good things. There I learn several great truths, as that it is impossible to see into the ways of futurity, that punishment always attends the villain, that love is the fond soother of the human breast, that we should not resist heaven's will, for in resisting heaven's will, heaven's will is resisted; with several other sentiments equally new, delicate and striking. Every new tragedy therefore I shall go to see; for 25
reflections of this nature make a tolerable harmony, when mixed up with a proper quantity of drum, trumpet, thunder, lightening, or the scene shifter's whistle.² Adieu.

5 works] 62; the works *PL*

12 human] 62; the human *PL*

15 don't] *PL*; do not 62 his company] 62; to part company *PL*

20 things. There] 62; things; there *PL*

23-24 for in . . . is resisted;] 62; *om. PL*

26 make] 62; make up *PL*

¹ Cf. Goldsmith's review of Kedington's *Critical Dissertations*: 'The praise bestowed on a writer of established reputation, is perhaps more frequently designed as a compliment to ourselves than the author: we only shew the rectitude of our own taste by a standard allowed already to be just . . .' (above, I, p. 213, and see the note on the passage).

² Cf. Goldsmith's criticism of theatrical taste in his essay 'On the Present State of our Theatres' in the *Weekly Magazine*: 'These are the scenes that charm; to see the stage crowded with figures, to hear trumpets, crackers, and tempests, these are what lift our souls into greatness, and even, for a while, steal us from ourselves' (below, III, p. 54).

LETTER XCVIII.¹

[A description of the courts of justice, in Westminster Hall.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

5 I HAD some intentions lately of going to visit Bedlam the place where those who go mad are confined. I went to wait upon the man in black to be my conductor, but I found him preparing to go to Westminster-hall, where the English hold their courts of justice. It gave me some surprize to find my friend engaged in a law suit, but
10 more so when he informed me that it had been depending for several years. *How is it possible*, cried I, *for a man who knows the world to go to law; I am well acquainted with the courts of justice in China, they resemble rat traps every one of them, nothing more easy to get in, but to get out again is attended with some difficulty, and more cunning than rats*
15 *are generally found to possess!*

Faith, replied my friend, I should not have gone to law, but that I was assured of success before I began; things were represented to me in so alluring a light, that I thought by barely declaring myself a candidate for the prize, I had nothing more to do but to enjoy the
20 fruits of the victory. Thus have I been upon the eve of an imaginary triumph every term these ten years, have travelled forward with victory ever in my view, but ever out of reach; however at present I fancy we have hampered our antagonist in such a manner, that without some unforeseen demur, we shall this very day lay him
25 fairly on his back.

If things be so situated, said I, *I don't care if I attend you to the courts and partake in the pleasure of your success. But prithee*, continued I as we set forward, *what reasons have you to think an affair at last concluded, which has given you so many former disappointments?* My
30 lawyer tells me, returned he, that I have Salkeld and Ventris strong in my favour, and that there are no less than fifteen cases in point. *I understand*, said I, *those are two of your judges who have already declared their opinions.* Pardon me, replied my friend, Salkeld and Ventris are lawyers who some hundred years ago gave their opinion
35 on cases similar to mine, these opinions which make for me my

17 represented] PL; presented 62

19 to enjoy] 62; enjoy PL

25 on] 62; upon PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 28 November 1760.

lawyer is to cite, and those opinions which look another way are cited by the lawyer employed by my antagonist, as I observed I have Salkeld and Ventris for me, he has Cooke and Hales, for him, and he that has most opinions is most likely to carry his cause. *But where is the necessity*, cried I, *of prolonging a suit by citing the opinions and reports of others, since the same good sense which determined lawyers in former ages, may serve to guide your judges at this day.*¹ They, at that time gave their opinions only from the light of reason, your judges have the same light at present to direct them, let me even add a greater, as in former ages, there were many prejudices from which the present is happily free. If arguing from authorities be exploded from every other branch of learning, why should it be particularly adhered to in this? I plainly foresee how such a method of investigation must embarrass every suit, and even perplex the student, ceremonies will be multiplied, formalities must encrease and more time will thus be spent in learning the arts of litigation than in the discovery of right. 5 10 15

I see, cries my friend, that you are for a speedy administration of justice, but all the world will grant that the more time that is taken up in considering any subject the better it will be understood. Besides, it is the boast of an Englishman, that his property is secure, and all the world will grant that a deliberate administration of justice is the best way to secure his property. Why have we so many lawyers, but to secure our property, why so many formalities, but to secure our property? Not less than one hundred thousand families live in opulence, elegance and ease, merely by securing our property. 20 25

To embarrass justice returned I, by a multiplicity of laws, or to hazard it by a confidence in our judges, are, I grant, the opposite rocks on which legislative wisdom has ever split,² in one case the client resembles that Emperor, who is said to have been suffocated with the bedcloaths, which were only designed to keep him warm, in the other to that town which let the enemy take possession of its 30

18 time that] 62; time PL

¹ The paragraph to this point, except the first sentence, appears to have been suggested by Voltaire's *Dialogue entre un plaideur et un avocat* (1751), in *Œuvres complètes*, ed. Moland, xxiii (Paris, 1879), 493-4. See J. E. Brown in *Modern Philology*, xxiii (1926), 278-9.

² From Johnson's 'The Life of the King of Prussia' in the *Literary Magazine* for 1756: 'To embarrass justice by multiplicity of laws, or to hazard it by confidence in judges, seem to be the opposite rocks on which all civil institutions have been wrecked, and between which legislative wisdom has never yet found an open passage' (*Works* [Oxford, 1825], vi. 451). See R. W. Seitz, *Review of English Studies*, v (1929), 414, n. 2.

walls, in order to shew the world how little they depended upon
 aught but courage for safety:—But bless me, what numbers do I
 see here—all in black,—how is it possible that half this multitude
 find employment? Nothing so easily conceived, returned my com-
 5 panion, they live by watching each other. For instance, the catchpole
 watches the man in debt, the attorney watches the catchpole, the
 counsellor watches the attorney, the solicitor the counsellor, and
 all find sufficient employment. I conceive you, interrupted I, they
 watch each other, but it is the client that pays them all for watching;
 10 it puts me in mind of a Chinese fable, which is entituled, *Five animals
 at a meal.*

A grasshopper filled with dew, was merrily singing under a shade,
 a whangam that eats grasshoppers had marked it for its prey, and was
 just stretching forth to devour it; a serpent that had for a long time
 15 fed only on whangams, was coiled up to fasten on the whangam, a
 yellow bird was just upon the wing to dart upon the serpent; an
 hawk had just stooped from above, to seize the yellow bird; all
 were intent on their prey, and unmindful of their danger:¹ So the
 whangam eat the grasshopper, the serpent eat the whangam, the
 20 yellow bird the serpent, and the hawk the yellow bird; when sousing
 from on high, a vulture gobbled up the hawk, grasshopper, whangam,
 and all in a moment.

I had scarce finished my fable, when the lawyer came to inform my
 friend, that his cause was put off till another term, that money was
 25 wanted to retain, and that all the world was of opinion, that the very
 next hearing would bring him off victorious. If so, then cries my

1 upon] 62; on PL

11 meal.] 62; meal. The fable is this. PL

12 a shade] 62; the shade PL

14 forth] 62; forward PL

16 an] PL; a 62

20 and] 62; om. PL

24 till] 62; to PL

¹ The fable to this point is adapted from Du Halde, i. 600: '... I have been in the Park, where there was a Grasshopper, perch'd aloft upon a Tree, and being well fill'd with Dew, was singing very pleasantly. A *Tang lang* was behind her, whom she did not observe, for if she had, she would have soon chang'd her Note. I observ'd this *Tang lang* which privately glided down, and drawing near the Grasshopper, already reckon'd her as his Prey, but she did not see him. Pretty near him upon the same Tree, there was a Yellow Bird ready to dart upon the *Tang lang*. I observ'd this Bird likewise, who being quite intent upon his Prey, was lengthning his Neck to seize it, without perceiving that I was below, and that I was looking at him.'

friend, I believe it will be my wisest way to continue the cause for another term, and in the mean time my friend here and I will go and see Bedlam. Adieu.

LETTER XCIX.¹

[A visit from the little Beau. The indulgence with which the fair sex are treated, 5
in several parts of Asia.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

I Lately received a visit from the little beau, who I found 10
had assumed a new flow of spirits with a new suit of cloaths. Our discourse happened to turn upon the different treatment of the fair sex here and in Asia, with the influence of beauty in refining our manners and improving our conversation.

I soon perceived he was strongly prejudiced in favour of the Asiatic method of treating the sex, and that it was impossible to 15
persuade him, but that a man was happier who had four wives at his command, than he who had only one. "It is true, cries he, your men of fashion in the East are slaves, and under some terrors of having their throats squeezed by a bow-string; but what then; they can find ample consolation in a seraglio; they make indeed an in- 20
different figure in conversation abroad, but then they have a seraglio to console them at home. I am told they have no balls, drums, nor operas, but then they have got a seraglio;² they may be deprived of

17 had only] 62; only had PL

17-18 your men of fashion in] 62; the Lords and Omrahs of PL

18 some] 62; continual PL

20 can] 62; om. PL they make indeed] 62; the men indeed make PL

22 I am told they] 62; They may PL nor] 62; or PL

23 got] 62; om. PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Monday, 29 December 1760.

² Goldsmith appears to have been influenced here by Saint-Foix's *Lettres turques* (1730), lettre v, in *Œuvres complètes de M. de Saint-Foix* (Paris, 1778), ii. 373-4: 'Nous étions hier cinq ou six femmes chez moi; entra un jeune homme des amis de Mazaro; on parloit de Constantinople. Constantinople! s'écria-t-il, en se laissant aller un fauteuil; Constantinople! Ah! Mesdames, c'est le séjour de mon ame! Un honnête Musulman doit mener une vie bien délicieuse. En quoi, Monsieur, lui demandai-je assez étonnée de son enthousiasme? Il n'y a à Constantinople ni bals, ni assemblées, ni jeu, ni soupers, ni spectacles, ni ce concours d'arts, de sciences & de talens qui fournissent chaque jour dans Paris de nouveaux amusemens. . . . Cela se peut, Madame, me répondit-il, cela se peut; mais le plaisir d'avoir un Serrail!'

wine and French cookery, but they have a seraglio; a seraglio, a seraglio, my dear creature, wipes off every inconvenience in the world.

“Besides, I am told, your Asiatic beauties are the most convenient
 5 women alive, for they have no souls, positively there’s nothing in nature I should like so much as ladies without souls;’ soul, here, is the utter ruin of half the sex. A girl of eighteen shall have soul enough to spend an hundred pound in the turning of a trump. Her mother shall have soul enough to ride a sweepstake match at an
 10 horse race; her maiden aunt shall have soul enough to purchase the furniture of a whole toy shop, and others shall have soul enough to behave as if they had no souls at all.”

With respect to the soul, interrupted I, the Asiatics are much kinder to the fair sex than you imagine; instead of one soul, Fohi
 15 the idol of China gives every woman three, the Bramines give them fifteen;² and even Mahomet himself, no where excludes the sex from Paradise. Abulfeda reports, that an old woman one day importuning him to know what she ought to do in order to gain Paradise? *My good Lady*, answered the Prophet, *old women never get there*; what
 20 never get to Paradise, returned the matron, in a fury! Never, says he, for they always grow young by the way.³

No, Sir, continued I, the men of Asia behave with more deference

2-3 inconvenience in the world] 62; inconvenience, and is a panacea for every calamity PL

5 there’s] PL; there is 62

8 spend] 62; spend you PL pound] PL; pounds 62

15 three.] 62; three, (1), with footnote (1) Vid. Du Halde Passim. PL

16 fifteen] 62; fifteen (2) with footnote (2) Hyde rell. Pers. PL

21 way] 62; way (3) with footnote (3) Vid. Alcoran, Cap. 54. PL

¹ See the first speech in Act IV of Farquhar’s *The Beaux’ Stratagem*: ‘Were I born an humble Turk, where women have no soul or property . . .’; and cf. the *Female Spectator*, bk. xiii (1745), iii. 12: ‘The Turks maintain that Women have no Souls, and there are not wanting some among Christians who lean to that Opinion.’

² Goldsmith’s reference in the *Public Ledger* is to Thomas Hyde’s *Historia Religionis veterum Persarum, eorumque Magorum* (Oxford, 1700). I have not found the particular place in the book to which he supposedly refers.

³ This anecdote together with the reference in the *Public Ledger* to ‘Alcoran, Cap. 54’ is taken from Voltaire’s *Dictionnaire philosophique*, art. ‘Alcoran’, sec. 2 (first published in 1748): ‘Abulfeda rapporte qu’une vieille l’importunant un jour, en lui demandant ce qu’il fallait faire pour aller en paradis: “M’amie, lui dit-il, le paradis n’est pas pour les vieilles.” La bonne femme se mit à pleurer, et le prophète, pour la consoler, lui dit: “Il n’y aura point de vieilles, parce qu’elles rajeuniront.” Cette doctrine consolante est confirmée dans le cinquante-quatrième chapitre du *Koran*’ (*Œuvres complètes*, ed. Moland, xvii [Paris, 1878], 105).

to the sex than you seem to imagine. As you of Europe say grace, upon sitting down to dinner, so it is the custom in China to say grace, when a man goes to bed to his wife. *And may I die*, returned my companion, *but a very pretty ceremony; for seriously, Sir, I see no reason why a man should not be as grateful in one situation as in the* 5 *other. Upon honour, I always find myself much more disposed to gratitude, on the couch of a fine woman, than upon sitting down to a sirloin of beef.*

Another ceremony, said I, resuming the conversation, in favour of the sex amongst us, is the bride's being allowed after marriage, *her* 10 *three days of freedom*. During this interval a thousand extravagancies are practised by either sex. The lady is placed upon the nuptial bed, and numberless monkey tricks are played round to divert her. One gentleman smells her perfumed handkerchief, another attempts to untie her garters, a third pulls off her shoe to play hunt the slipper, 15 another pretends to be an ideot, and endeavours to raise a laugh by grimacing; in the mean time the glass goes briskly about,¹ till ladies, gentlemen, wife, husband, and all are mixed together in one inundation of arrack punch.

"Strike me dumb, deaf, and blind, cried my companion, but very 20 pretty; there's some sense in your Chinese ladies condescensions; but among us you shall scarce find one of the whole sex that shall hold her good humour for three days together. No later than yesterday I happened to say some civil things to a citizen's wife of my acquaintance, not because I loved, but because I had charity; and 25 what do you think was the tender creature's reply? Only that she detested my pigtail wig, high heeled shoes, and sallow complexion.

4 ceremony] 62; ceremony it is PL

7 on] 62; upon approaching PL

15 slipper] 62; slipper (4) with footnote (4) Vid. Du Halde, Vol. II. Folio, p. 45. PL

21 condescensions] 62; condescension PL

¹ As the note in the *Public Ledger* suggests, this account is derived from Du Halde, ii. 45: '... almost so late as our Days, a detestable Custom has obtain'd, tho' not in our Books, and only fit to be used among wild Barbarians. The Separation of the Apartment is delayed for what is called the *three Days of Freedom*, which are spent in divers Extravagancies. The Bride is placed upon her Nuptial Bed; a thousand Monkey Tricks are played round her; her Shoes are pulled wantonly off, by one who hides them in her Sleeve; another takes away the Veil that covers her Face; a third ties up her Head very tight; another smells at her Hair, and cries, that it diffuses an admirable Perfume; others appear to be Idiots, and endeavour to raise a Laugh by their Grimaces, and indecent Buffooneries: All this while the Glass goes briskly about; and this they call Rejoicing and Diversions.'

That is all. Nothing more! Yes, by the heavens, though she was more ugly than an unpainted actress, I found her more insolent than a thorough bred woman of quality."

He was proceeding in this wild manner, when his invective was
 5 interrupted, by the man in black, who entered the apartment, introducing his niece a young lady of exquisite beauty. Her very appearance was sufficient to silence the severest satyrist of the sex; easy without pride, and free without impudence, she seemed capable of supplying every sense with pleasure; her looks, her conversation
 10 were natural and unconstrained; she had neither been taught to languish nor ogle, to laugh without a jest, or sigh without sorrow. I found that she had just returned from abroad and had been conversant in the manners of the world. Curiosity prompted me to ask several questions, but she declined them all. I own I never found
 15 myself so strongly prejudiced in favour of apparent merit before; and could willingly have prolonged our conversation, but the company after some time withdrew. Just, however, before the little beau took his leave he called me aside, and requested I would change him a twenty pound bill, which as I was incapable of doing, he was con-
 20 tented with borrowing half a crown. Adieu.

LETTER C.¹

[A life of independance praised.]

From Lien Chi Altangi to Hingpo, at Moscow.

25 **F**EW virtues have been more praised by moralists, than generosity; every practical treatise of Ethics tends to encrease our sensibility of the distresses of others, and to relax the grasp of frugality. Philosophers that are poor praise it because they are gainers by its effects, and the opulent Seneca himself has written a treatise on benefits, though he was known to give nothing away.
 30 But among the many who have enforced the duty of giving, I'm surprised there are none to inculcate the ignominy of receiving, to shew that by every favour we accept, we in some measure forfeit our native freedom, and that a state of continual dependance on the generosity of others is a life of gradual debasement.

¹ by the heavens,] 62; *om.* PL

23 *at*] PL; *by the way* of 62

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 2 January 1761.

Were men taught to despise the receiving obligations with the same force of reasoning and declamation that they are instructed to confer them, we might then see every person in society filling up the requisite duties of his station with chearful industry, neither relaxed by hope, nor sullen from disappointment.

Every favour a man receives, in some measure sinks him below his dignity, and in proportion to the value of the benefit, or the frequency of its acceptance, he gives up so much of his natural independance. He therefore, who thrives upon the unmerited bounty of another, if he has any sensibility, suffers the worst of servitude; the shackled slave may murmur without reproach, but the humble dependant is taxed with ingratitude upon every symptom of discontent, the one may rave round the walls of his cell, but the other lingers in all the silence of mental confinement. To encrease his distress; every new obligation but adds to the former load which kept the vigorous mind from rising;¹ till at last, elastic no longer, it shapes itself to constraint, and puts on habitual servility.

It is thus with the feeling mind; but there are some who born without any share of sensibility receive favour after favour, and still cringe for more, who accept the offer of generosity with as little reluctance as the wages of merit, and even make thanks for past benefits an indirect petition for new; such I grant can suffer no debasement from dependance, since they were originally as vile as was possible to be; dependance degrades only the ingenuous, but leaves the sordid mind in pristine meanness. In this manner therefore long continued generosity is misplaced, or it is injurious; it either finds a man worthless, or it makes him so; and true it is, that the person who is contented to be *often* obliged, ought not to have been obliged at all.

Yet while I describe the meanness of a life of continued dependance, I would not be thought to include those natural or political subordinations which subsist in every society, for in such, tho' dependance is exacted from the inferior, yet the obligation on either side is mutual. The son must rely upon his parent for support, but the parent lies under the same obligations to give, that the other has to expect; the subordinate officer must receive the commands of his

¹ the receiving] 62; receiving *PL*

²⁶ is misplaced . . . injurious; it] 62; *om. PL*

superior, but for this obedience the former has a right to demand an intercourse of favour; such is not the dependance I would depreciate, but that where every expected favour must be the result of mere benevolence in the giver, where the benefit can be kept without
 5 remorse or transferred without injustice. The character of a legacy hunter for instance is detestable in some countries and despicable in all; this universal contempt of a man who infringes upon none of the laws of society, some moralists have arraigned as a popular and unjust prejudice; never considering the necessary degradations a
 10 wretch must undergo, who previously expects to grow rich by benefits without having either natural or social claims to enforce his petitions.

But this intercourse of benefaction and acknowledgment is often injurious even to the giver as well as the receiver; a man can gain
 15 but little knowledge of himself, or of the world amidst a circle of those whom hope or gratitude has gathered round him; their unceasing humiliations must necessarily encrease his comparative magnitude, for all men measure their own abilities by those of their company; thus being taught to over-rate his merit, he in reality
 20 lessens it; encreasing in confidence, but not in power, his professions end in empty boast, his undertakings in shameful disappointment.

It is perhaps one of the severest misfortunes of the great, that they are, in general, obliged to live among men whose real value is lessened by dependance, and whose minds are enslaved by obliga-
 25 tion. The humble companion may have at first accepted patronage with generous views, but soon he feels the mortifying influence of conscious inferiority, by degrees sinks into a flatterer, and from flattery at last degenerates into stupid veneration. To remedy this the great often dismiss their old dependants, and take new. Such
 30 changes are falsely imputed to levity, falsehood, or caprice, in the patron, since they may be more justly ascribed to the client's gradual deterioration.

No, my son, a life of independance is generally a life of virtue. It is that which fits the soul for every generous flight of humanity, free-
 35 dom, and friendship. To give should be our pleasure, but to receive our shame; serenity, health, and affluence, attend the desire of rising

4 where the benefit] 62; and which *PL*

9 unjust] 62; an unjust *PL*

25 accepted] 62; accepted of *PL*

35 friendship. To] 62; friendship; to *PL*

by labour; misery, repentance, and disrespect that of succeeding by extorted benevolence; the man who can thank himself alone for the happiness he enjoys is truly blest; and lovely, far more lovely the sturdy gloom of laborious indigence, than the fawning simper of thriving adulation. Adieu.

5

LETTER CI.

[That people must be contented to be guided by those, whom they have appointed to govern. A story to this effect.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

10

IN every society some men are born to teach, and others to receive instruction; some to work, and others to enjoy in idleness the fruits of their industry; some to govern, and others to obey. Every people, how free soever, must be contented to give up part of their liberty and judgment to those who govern, in exchange for their hopes of security; and the motives which first influenced their choice in the election of their governors should ever be weighed against the succeeding apparent inconsistencies of their conduct. All cannot be rulers, and men are generally best governed by a few. In making way thro' the intricacies of business, the smallest obstacles are apt to retard the execution of what is to be planned by a multiplicity of counsels; the judgment of one alone being always fittest for winding through the labyrinths of intrigue, and the obstructions of disappointment. A serpent, which, as the fable observes, is furnished with one head and many tails, is much more capable of subsistence and expedition, than another, which is furnished with but one tail and many heads.¹

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Obvious as these truths are, the people of this country seem insensible of their force. Not satisfied with the advantages of internal peace and opulence, they still murmur at their governors, and interfere in the execution of their designs; as if they wanted to be

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6 LETTER CI.] *PL for 5 January 1761, in which this letter presumably first appeared, is not present in the British Museum file, and the editor has not found it elsewhere. For this letter, consequently, 62 is used as the copy-text.*

¹ Probably Goldsmith had in mind La Fontaine's 'Le Dragon à plusieurs têtes, et le dragon à plusieurs queues' (*Fables* i. 12).

something more than happy. But as the Europeans instruct by argument, and the Asiatics mostly by narration, were I to address them, I should convey my sentiments in the following story.

Takupi had long been Prime Minister of Tipartala, a fertile
5 country that stretches along the western confines of China. During his administration, whatever advantages could be derived from arts, learning, and commerce, were seen to bless the people; nor were the necessary precautions of providing for the security of the state forgotten. It often happens, however, that when men are possessed of
10 all they want, they then begin to find torment from imaginary afflictions, and lessen their present enjoyments, by foreboding that those enjoyments are to have an end. The people now therefore endeavoured to find out grievances; and after some search, actually began to think themselves aggrieved. A petition against the enormities of
15 Takupi was carried to the throne in due form; and the Queen who governed the country, willing to satisfy her subjects, appointed a day, in which his accusers should be heard, and the Minister should stand upon his defence.

The day being arrived, and the Minister brought before the
20 tribunal, a carrier, who supplied the city with fish, appeared among the number of his accusers. He exclaimed, that it was the custom, time immemorial, for carriers to bring their fish upon an horse in a hamper; which being placed on one side, and balanced by a stone on the other, was thus conveyed with ease and safety: but that the
25 prisoner, moved either by a spirit of innovation, or perhaps bribed by the hamper-makers, had obliged all carriers to use the stone no longer, but balance one hamper with another; an order entirely repugnant to the customs of all antiquity, and those of the kingdom of Tipartala in particular.

30 The carrier finished; and the whole court shook their heads at the innovating Minister: when a second witness appeared. He was inspector of the city buildings, and accused the disgraced favourite of having given orders for the demolition of an ancient ruin, which obstructed the passage thro' one of the principal streets. He observed,
35 that such buildings were noble monuments of barbarous antiquity; contributed finely to shew how little their ancestors understood of architecture: and for that reason such monuments should be held sacred, and suffered gradually to decay.

The last witness now appeared. This was a widow, who had
40 laudably attempted to burn herself upon her husband's funeral pile.

But the innovating minister had prevented the execution of her design, and was insensible to her tears, protestations, and entreaties.

The Queen could have pardoned the two former offences; but this last was considered as so gross an injury to the sex, and so directly contrary to all the customs of antiquity, that it called for immediate justice. "What, cried the Queen, not suffer a woman to burn herself when she thinks proper? The sex are to be very prettily tutored, no doubt, if they must be restrained from entertaining their female friends now and then with a fried wife, or roasted acquaintance. I sentence the criminal to be banished my presence for ever for his injurious treatment of the sex."

Takupi had been hitherto silent, and spoke only to shew the sincerity of his resignation. "Great Queen, cried he, I acknowledge my crime; and since I am to be banished, I beg it may be to some ruined town, or desolate village in the country I have governed. I shall find some pleasure in improving the soil, and bringing back a spirit of industry among the inhabitants." His request appearing reasonable, it was immediately complied with; and a courtier had orders to fix upon a place of banishment, answering the Minister's description. After some months search, however, the enquiry proved fruitless; neither a desolate village, nor a ruined town, was found in the whole kingdom. *Alas*, said Takupi to the Queen, *How can that country be ill governed which has neither a desolate village, nor a ruined town in it?* The Queen perceived the justice of his expostulation, and the Minister was received into more than former favour.

LETTER CII.¹

[The passion for gaming among ladies, ridiculed.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

THE Ladies here are by no means such ardent gamesters as the women of Asia. In this respect I must do the English justice, for I love to praise where applause is justly merited. Nothing more common in China than to see two women of fashion continue gaming 'till one has won all the other's cloaths, and stripped her

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 13 January 1761.

quite naked; the winner thus marching off in a double suit of finery, and the loser shrinking behind in the primitive simplicity of nature.¹

No doubt you remember when *Shang* our maiden aunt played with a sharper. First her money went: Then her trinkets were produced; her cloaths followed piece by piece soon after; when she had thus played herself quite naked, being a woman of spirit, and willing to pursue *her own*, she staked her teeth; fortune was against her even here, and her teeth followed her cloaths; at last she played for her left eye, and, oh, hard fate, this too she lost; however she had the consolation of biting the sharper, for he never perceived that it was made of glass till it became his own.

How happy, my friend, are the English ladies, who never rise to such an inordinance of passion; though the sex here are naturally fond of games of chance, and are taught to manage games of skill from their infancy, yet they never pursue ill fortune with such amazing intrepidity. Indeed I may entirely acquit them of ever playing.—I mean of playing for their eyes or their teeth.

It is true they often stake their fortune, their beauty, health, and reputations at a gaming table. It even sometimes happens, that they play their husbands into a jail; yet still they preserve a decorum unknown to our wives and daughters of China. I have been present at a route in this country, where a woman of fashion after losing her money, has sate writhing in all the agonies of bad luck, and yet after all, never once attempted to strip a single petticoat, or cover the board as her last stake with her head cloaths.

However, though I praise their moderation at play, I must not conceal their assiduity. In China our women except upon some great days are never permitted to finger a dice box, but here every day seems to be a festival; and night itself which gives others rest, only serves to increase the female gamester's industry. I have been told of an old lady in the country, who being given over by the physicians, played with the curate of her parish to pass the time away; having won all his money, she next proposed playing for her

8 followed her cloaths] 62; followed, where her cloaths had gone before *PL*

9 too] 62; *om. PL*

19 table. It] 62; table; it *PL*

25 her last] 62; a last *PL*

27 assiduity. In] 62; assiduity; in *PL*

¹ Le Comte, ii. 80, describes the passion of the Chinese for gaming, but he says nothing about gaming among the women, which is probably Goldsmith's invention.

funeral charges; the proposal was accepted, but unfortunately the lady expired just as she had taken in her game.¹

There are some passions which though differently pursued, are attended with equal consequences in every country, here they game with more perseverance, there with greater fury; here they strip 5 their families, there they strip themselves naked. A lady in China, who indulges a passion for gaming, often becomes a drunkard; and by flourishing a dice box in one hand, she generally comes to brandish a dram cup in the other. Far be it from me to say there are any who drink drams in England; but it is natural to suppose, that 10 when a Lady has lost every thing else but her honour, she will be apt to toss that into the bargain; and grown insensible to nicer feelings, behave like the Spaniard, who when all his money was gone, endeavoured to borrow more, by offering to pawn his wisker.² Adieu.

6 naked. A] 62; naked; a *PL*

8 by flourishing] 62; she who flourishes *PL*

8-9 she generally comes to brandish] 62; generally brandishes *PL*

9 other. Far] 62; other; far *PL*

¹ This story appears with slightly different details in the section entitled 'Arliquiniana' in *The Miscellaneous Remains of Cardinal Perron, President Thuanus, Mon^{sr} St. Exremont, &c.* (1707), pp. 290-1: 'Speaking one Day of People that love Gaming, *Arliquin* told me, that he knew a Woman that lov'd Gaming very well, and yet withal was so Covetous, that she extended her Avarice beyond the Grave. This Woman, added he, falling Sick in the Country, . . . sent for the Curate, and offer'd to play with him, which Proposal, the Curate being us'd to Game, gladly accepted of. These two play'd together till the Curate lost all: And after she had won all his Money, she offer'd to play with him for the Expences of her own Funeral, in case she should Die: They play'd, and the Curate lost that also; then she oblig'd him to give her a Note for so much Money lent, as her Funeral Expences did amount to. This Woman falling very Sick and Ill, deliver'd the Note to her Son, and died within eight or ten Days after: The Curate Buried her without any Fees, and took up his Note again.'

² Cf. the anecdote concerning 'un fameux général portugais' in Montesquieu's *Lettres persanes*, lettre 78: ' . . . se trouvant avoir besoin d'argent, il coupa une de ses moustaches et envoya demander aux habitans de Goa vingt mille pistoles sur ce gage; elles lui furent prêtées d'abord, et, dans la suite, il retira sa moustache avec honneur.'

LETTER CIII.

[The Chinese Philosopher begins to think of quitting England.]

*From Lien Chi Altangi to ***, Merchant in Amsterdam.*

I HAVE just received a letter from my son, in which he informs
 5 me of the fruitlessness of his endeavours to recover the lady with
 whom he fled from Persia. He strives to cover under the appearance
 of fortitude a heart torn with anxiety and disappointment. I have
 offered little consolation; since that but too frequently feeds the
 10 sorrow which it pretends to deplore, and strengthens the impres-
 sion, which nothing but the external rubs of time and accident can
 thoroughly efface.

He informs me of his intentions of quitting Moscow the first
 opportunity, and travelling by land to Amsterdam. I must therefore,
 upon his arrival, entreat the continuance of your friendship; and beg
 15 of you to provide him with proper directions for finding me in
 London. You can scarcely be sensible of the joy I expect upon seeing
 him once more: the ties between the father and the son among us of
 China are much more closely drawn than with you of Europe.

The remittances sent me from Argun to Moscow came in safety.
 20 I cannot sufficiently admire that spirit of honesty, which prevails
 through the whole country of Siberia: perhaps the savages of that
 desolate region are the only untutored people of the globe, that
 cultivate the moral virtues, even without knowing that their actions
 merit praise. I have been told surprising things of their goodness,
 25 benevolence, and generosity; and the uninterrupted commerce be-
 tween China and Russia serves as a collateral confirmation.

*Let us, says the Chinese law-giver, admire the rude virtues of the
 ignorant, but rather imitate the delicate morals of the polite.* In the
 country where I reside, though honesty and benevolence be not so
 30 congenial; yet art supplies the place of nature. Though here every
 vice is carried to excess; yet every virtue is practised also with
 unexampled superiority. A city like this is the soil for great virtues
 and great vices; the villain can soon improve here in the deepest
 mysteries of deceiving; and the practical philosopher can every day
 35 meet new incitements to mend his honest intentions. There are no
 pleasures, sensual or sentimental, which this city does not produce;

1 LETTER CIII.] PL for 18 January 1761, in which this letter presumably first
 appeared, is not present in the British Museum file, and the editor has not found it elsewhere.
 For this letter, consequently, 62 is used as the copy-text.

yet, I know not how, I could not be content to reside here for life. There is something so seducing in that spot in which we first had existence, that nothing but it can please; whatever vicissitudes we experience in life, however we toil, or wheresoever we wander, our fatigued wishes still recur to home for tranquillity, we long to die 5 in that spot which gave us birth, and in that pleasing expectation opiate every calamity.

You now therefore perceive that I have some intentions of leaving this country; and yet my designed departure fills me with reluctance and regret. Though the friendships of travellers are generally more 10 transient than vernal snows, still I feel an uneasiness at breaking the connections I have formed since my arrival; particularly I shall have no small pain in leaving my usual companion, guide, and instructor.

I shall wait for the arrival of my son before I set out. He shall be my companion in every intended journey for the future; in his com- 15 pany I can support the fatigues of the way with redoubled ardour, pleased at once with conveying instruction, and exacting obedience.

Adieu.

LETTER CIV.¹

[The arts some make use of to appear learned.]

20

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

OUR scholars of China have a most profound veneration for 25 forms. A first rate beauty never studied the decorums of dress with more assiduity; they may properly enough be said to be clothed with wisdom from head to foot; they have their philosophical caps and philosophical whiskers, their philosophical slippers and philosophical fans; there is even a philosophical standard for measuring the nails, and yet with all this seeming wisdom they are often found to be mere empty pretenders. 30

A philosophical beau is not so frequent in Europe, yet I am told that such characters are found here. I mean such as punctually support all the decorums of learning, without being really very

29 the nails] 62; their nails *PL*

30 to be mere empty pretenders] 62; as dull as their neighbours *PL*

profound or naturally possessed of a fine understanding, who labour hard to obtain the titular honours attending literary merit, who flatter others, in order to be flattered in turn, and only study to be thought students.

- 5 A character of this kind generally receives company in his study, in all the pensive formality of slippers, night gown, and easy chair. The table is covered with a large book, which is always kept open, and never read, his solitary hours being dedicated to dozing, mending pens, feeling his pulse, peeping through the microscope, and
10 sometimes reading amusing books, which he condemns in company. His library is preserved with the most religious neatness, and is generally a repository of scarce books, which bear an high price, because too dull or useless to become common by the ordinary methods of publication.
- 15 Such men are generally candidates for admittance into literary clubs, academies, and institutions, where they regularly meet to give and receive a little instruction and a great deal of praise.⁷ In conversation they never betray ignorance, because they never seem to receive information. Offer a new observation, they have heard it
20 before; pinch them in an argument, and they reply with a sneer.

Yet how trifling soever these little arts may appear, they answer one valuable purpose, of gaining the practisers the esteem they wish for. The bounds of a man's knowledge are easily concealed, if he has but prudence; but all can readily see and admire a gilt library, a set
25 of long nails, a silver standish, or a well-combed whisker, who are incapable of distinguishing a dunce.

When Father Matthew, the first European Missioner, entered China, the Court was informed, that he possessed great skill in astronomy; he was therefore sent for, and examined. The established
30 Astronomers of State undertook this task, and made their report to the Emperor, that his skill was but very superficial, and no way comparable to their own. The Missioner, however, appealed from their judgment to experience, and challenged them to calculate an eclipse of the moon that was to happen a few nights following. What,

7 a large book] 62; some crabbed folio *PL*

15 for admittance] 62; in order to be admitted *PL*

21 little arts] 62; ceremonies *PL*

27 European] 62; *om. PL*

said some, shall a Barbarian, without nails, pretend to vie with men in Astronomy, who have made it the study of their lives, with men who know half the knowable characters of words, who wear scientific caps and slippers, and who have gone through every literary degree with applause? They accepted the challenge confident of success. The eclipse began, the Chinese produced a most splendid apparatus, and were fifteen minutes wrong; the Missioner, with a single instrument, was exact to a second. This was convincing, but the Court Astronomers were not to be convinced; instead of acknowledging their error, they assured the Emperor, that their calculations were certainly exact, but that the stranger without nails, had actually bewitched the moon. *Well then*, cries the good Emperor, smiling at their ignorance, *you shall still continue to be servants of the moon, but I constitute this man her Controller.*¹

China is thus replete with men, whose only pretensions to knowledge arise from external circumstances, and in Europe every country abounds with them in proportion to its ignorance. Spain and Flanders, who are behind the rest of Europe in learning, at least three centuries, have twenty literary titles and marks of distinction unknown in France or England: they have their *Clarissimi* and *Preclarissimi*, their *Accuratissimi* and *Minutissimi*; a Round Cap entitles one Student to argue, and a Square Cap permits another to teach; while a Cap with a Tassel almost sanctifies the head it happens to cover. But where true knowledge is cultivated, these formalities begin to disappear; the ermin'd cowl, the solemn beard and sweeping train are laid aside; Philosophers dress, and talk, and think, like other men, and lamb-skin dressers, and cap-makers, and tail-carriers, now deplore a literary decay.

3-4 who wear . . . and slippers,] 62; om. PL

9 instead] 62; and instead PL

10 they] 62; om. PL

12 moon.] 62; moon; PL

12-13 at their ignorance] 62; om. PL

17 ignorance.] 62; ignorance; PL

20 England: they] 62; England. They PL

28 now] 62; om. PL

¹ Du Halde, ii. 4-10, gives an account of Father Matthew Ricci's mission in China and comments on his mathematical and geographical knowledge, but he does not tell this anecdote, and it does not appear in Nicolas Trigault's thousand-page book, *Histoire de l'expédition chrestienne en la Chine, entreprise par les peres de la Compagnie de Iesus. Tirée des commentaires du Pere Mathieu Riccius de la mesme Compagnie* (Paris, 1618).

For my own part, my Friend, I have seen enough of presuming ignorance, never to venerate wisdom but where it actually appears. I have received literary titles and distinctions myself, and by the quantity of my own wisdom, know how very little wisdom they can confer. Adieu.

LETTER CV.¹

[The intended coronation described.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

10 **T**HE time for the young King's coronation approaches,² the great and the little world look forward with impatience. A Knight from the country, who has brought up his family to see, and be seen on this occasion, has taken all the lower part of the house where I lodge. His wife is laying in a large quantity of silks, which
15 the Mercer tells her are to be fashionable next season, and Miss her daughter has actually had her ears bored previous to the ceremony. In all this bustle of preparation I am considered as mere lumber, and have been shoved up two stories higher to make room for others my landlady seems perfectly convinced are my betters, but whom before
20 me she is contented with only calling very good company.

The little beau who has now forced himself into my intimacy, was yesterday giving me a most minute detail of the intended procession. All men are eloquent upon their favourite topic, and this seemed peculiarly adapted to the size and turn of his understanding. His
25 whole mind was blazoned over with a variety of glittering images; coronets, escutcheons, lace, fringe, tassels, stones, bugles, and spun

1-2 of presuming ignorance,] 62; om. PL

11 impatience. A] 62; impatience; a PL

16 bored previous to the ceremony] 62; bored, as she is to make her first appearance in the family pendants, of which she is the only unmarried possessor PL

18 others] 62; my betters, and others whom PL

25 blazoned] 62; tessuto PL

26 escutcheons,] 62; om. PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 10 February 1761.

² See, however, *ibid.* for 13 December 1760: 'It is now said that his Majesty's Coronation will not be till some time in August, because the Courts in Westminster Hall, must be taken down to make room for that solemnity.' The coronation actually took place in September, over seven months after the appearance of this letter.

glass. Here, cried he, Garter is to walk, and there Rouge Dragon marches with the escutcheons on his back. Here Clarencieux moves forward, and there Blue Mantle disdains to be left behind. Here the Aldermen march two and two, and there the undaunted Champion of England, no way terrified at the very numerous appearance of gentlemen and ladies, rides forward in complete armour, and with an intrepid air throws down his glove.¹ Ah, continued he, should any be so hardy as to take up that fatal glove, and so accept the challenge, we should see fine sport, the Champion would shew him no mercy; he would soon teach him all his passes with a witness. However, I am afraid we shall have none willing to try it with him, upon the approaching occasion, for two reasons, first because his antagonist would stand a chance of being killed in the single combat; and secondly, because if he escapes the Champion's arm, he would certainly be hanged for treason. No, no, I fancy none will be so hardy as to dispute it with a Champion like him innured to arms; and we shall probably see him prancing unmolested away, holding his bridle thus in one hand, and brandishing his dram cup in the other.

Some men have a manner of describing, which only wraps the subject in more than former obscurity, thus I was unable with all my companions volubility to form a distinct idea of the intended procession. I was certain, that the inauguration of a King should be conducted with solemnity and religious awe, and I could not be persuaded that there was much solemnity in this description. If this be true, cried I to myself, the people of Europe surely have a strange manner of mixing solemn and fantastic images together, pictures at once replete with burlesque and the sublime. At a time when the King enters into the most solemn compact with his people, nothing surely should be admitted to diminish from the real Majesty of the ceremony. A ludicrous image brought in at such a time throws an air of ridicule upon the whole. It some way resembles a picture I have seen designed by Albert Durer, where, amidst all the solemnity

3 behind. Here] 62; behind; here *PL*

10 witness. However] 62; witness; however *PL*

22 procession.] 62; procession; *PL*

27 sublime. At] 62; sublime; at *PL*

32 seen] 62; seen of the last judgment *PL*

¹ Goldsmith's knowledge of the order of march to the coronation probably came from an account such as the one in the *Public Advertiser* for 4 November 1760 of 'The Manner of the Grand Proceeding to the Coronation of a King, as used at the Coronation of His Majesty King George the First'.

of that awful scene, a deity judging and a trembling world awaiting the decree; he has introduced a merry mortal trundling his scolding wife to hell in a wheel barrow.

My companion, who mistook my silence during this interval of
 5 reflection for the rapture of astonishment, proceeded to describe those frivolous parts of the shew, that mostly struck his imagination, and to assure me that if I stayed in this country some months longer I should see fine things. For my own part, continued he, I know already of fifteen suits of cloaths, that would stand on one end with
 10 gold lace, all designed to be first shewn there, and as for diamonds, rubies, emeralds and pearls, we shall see them as thick as brass nails in a sedan chair. And then we are all to walk so majestically, thus, this foot always behind the foot before. The ladies are to fling nose-gays, the court poets to scatter verses, the spectators are to be all in
 15 full dress, Mrs. Tibbs, in a new sacque, ruffles and frenched hair, look where you will one thing finer than another, Mrs. Tibbs curtesies to the Duchess, her Grace returns the compliment with a bow. Largess cries the Herald. Make room cries the Gentleman Usher. Knock him down cries the guard. Ah, continued he, amazed
 20 at his own description, what an astonishing scene of grandeur can art produce from the smallest circumstance, when it thus actually turns to wonder one man putting on another man's hat.

I now found his mind was entirely set upon the fopperies of the pageant, and quite regardless of the real meaning of such costly
 25 preparations. *Pageants*, says Bacon, *are pretty things, but we should rather study to make them elegant than expensive.*¹ Processions, cavalcades, and all that fund of gay frippery, furnished out by taylor, barbers, and tire-women, mechanically influence the mind into veneration; an Emperor in his night-cap would not meet with half
 30 the respect of an Emperor with a glittering crown. Politics resemble religion, attempting to divest either of ceremony is the most certain method of bringing either into contempt. The weak must have their inducements to admiration as well as the wise, and it is the business

8 things. For] 62; things; for PL

18 Herald. Make] 62; Herald, make PL

19 Usher. Knock] 62; Usher, knock PL

30 crown. Politics] 62; crown; politics PL

guard. Ah] 62; guard; ah PL

¹ See Bacon's essay 'Of Masques and Triumphs': 'These things are but toys to come amongst such serious observations; but yet, since princes will have such things, it is better they should be graced with elegancy, than daubed with cost.'

of a sensible government to impress all ranks with a sense of subordination, whether this be effected by a diamond buckle or a virtuous edict, a sumptuary law or a glass necklace.

This interval of reflection only gave my companion spirits to begin his description afresh; and as a greater inducement to raise my curiosity, he informed me of the vast sums that were given by the spectators for places.¹ "That the ceremony must be fine, cries he, is very evident from the fine price that is paid for seeing it. Several ladies have assured me, they could willingly part with one eye, rather than be prevented from looking on with the other. Come, come, 10 continues he, I have a friend, who for my sake, will supply us with places at the most reasonable rates; I'll take care you shall not be imposed upon; and he will inform you of the use, finery, rapture, splendour, and enchantment of the whole ceremony better than I."

Follies often repeated lose their absurdity, and assume the appearance of reason; his arguments were so often and so strongly enforced, 15 that I had actually some thoughts of becoming a spectator. We accordingly went together to bespeak a place, but guess my surprise, when the man demanded a purse of gold for a single seat: I could hardly believe him serious upon making the demand. Prithee, 20 Friend, cried I, after I have paid Twenty Pounds for sitting here an hour or two, can I bring a part of the Coronation back? *No, Sir.* How long can I live upon it after I have come away? *Not long, Sir.* Can a Coronation cloath, feed, or fatten me? *Sir,* replied the man, *you seem to be under a mistake, all that you can bring away is the pleasure of having it to say, that you saw the coronation.* 25 Blast me, cries Tibbs, if that be all, there's no need of paying for that, since I'm resolved to have that pleasure, whether I am there or no!

I am conscious, my friend, that this is but a very confused

8 it. Several] 62; it; several *PL*

10 other.] 62; other: *PL*

20 demand.] 62; demand; *PL*

27 I'm] *PL*; I am 62

¹ See, for example, *Read's Weekly Journal* for 29 November 1760: 'One hundred and fifty guineas has been offered and refused for a tradesman's dining room, to see the procession of the coronation: the same sum has been given for his two pair of stairs room, and fifty for his garret'; the *Public Ledger* for 1 December: '... some of the houses in and about New Palace-yard, within the view of the procession, let at the amazing price of 400 guineas for the day'; the *Gazetteer* for 4 December: 'One gentleman, a baronet, has we are informed, offered five hundred pounds for a corner house, which commands ... a full prospect of New Palace Yard, in order to see the coronation procession.'

description of the intended ceremony. You may object that I neither settle rank, precedence, nor place; that I seem ignorant whether Gules walks before or behind Garter; that I have neither mentioned the dimensions of a Lord's cap, nor measured the length of a Lady's
 5 tail. I know your delight is in minute description, and this I am unhappily disqualified from furnishing, yet upon the whole, I fancy it will be no way comparable to the magnificence of our late Emperor Whangti's¹ procession, when he was married to the moon, at which Fum Hoam himself presided in person. Adieu.

10

LETTER CVI.²

[Funeral elegies written upon the great, ridiculed. A specimen of one.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

15 **I**T was formerly the custom here, when men of distinction died, for their surviving acquaintance to throw each a slight present into the grave. Several things of little value were made use of for that purpose; perfumes, reliques, spices, bitter herbs, camomile, wormwood, and verses. This custom however is almost discontinued; and nothing but verses alone are now lavished on such occasions; an
 20 oblation which they suppose may be interred with the dead, without any injury to the living.

Upon the death of the great therefore, the poets and undertakers are sure of employment. While one provides the long cloak, black staff, and mourning coach, the other produces the pastoral or elegy,
 25 the monody or apotheosis. The nobility need be under no apprehensions, but die as fast as they think proper, the poet and undertaker are ready to supply them; these can find metaphorical tears and family escutcheons at half an hour's warning; and when the one has

¹ ceremony. You] 62; ceremony; you PL

¹⁹ alone] 62; om. PL occasions] 62; occasions. When a Tartar dies, his bow, his horse, and all his worldly possessions are buried with him: the wiser English however throw nothing but poetry into the grave PL

²⁶ but] 62; they may PL think proper] 62; please PL

¹ This is the name of the third emperor of China; the 'late Emperor', who died in 1722, was Kang-hi (Du Halde, i. 138, 234).

² In the *Public Ledger* for Wednesday, 4 March 1761.

soberly laid the body in the grave, the other is ready to fix it figuratively among the stars.

There are several ways of being poetically sorrowful on such occasions. The bard is now some pensive youth of science, who sits deploring among the tombs; again he is Thyrsis, complaining in a circle of harmless sheep. Now Britannia sits upon her own shore, and gives a loose to maternal tenderness; at another time, Parnassus, even the mountain Parnassus, gives way to sorrow, and is bathed in tears of distress.

But the most usual manner is this: Damon meets Menalcas, who has got a most gloomy countenance. The shepherd asks his friend, whence that look of distress? to which the other replies, that Pollio is no more. If that be the case then, cries Damon, let us retire to yonder bower at some distance off, where the cypress and the jessamine add fragrance to the breeze; and let us weep alternately for Pollio, the friend of shepherds, and the patron of every muse. Ah! returns his fellow shepherd, what think you rather of that grotto by the fountain side; the murmuring stream will help to assist our complaints, and a nightingale on a neighbouring tree will join her voice to the concert. When the place is thus settled they begin: The brook stands still to hear their lamentations; the cows forget to graze; and the very tygers start from the forest with sympathetic concern.¹ By the tombs of our ancestors, my dear Fum, I am quite unaffected in all this distress: the whole is liquid laudanum to my spirits; and a tyger of common sensibility has twenty times more tenderness than I.

But though I could never weep with the complaining shepherd,

2 stars] 62; constellations *PL*

10 is this: Damon meets] 62; is, Damon's meeting *PL*

20 thus] 62; *om. PL*

¹ Pastoral elegies are similarly ridiculed in the *Guardian*, No. 30 (15 April 1713): 'Indeed most of the occasional Pastorals we have, are built upon one and the same Plan. A Shepherd asks his Fellow, why he is so pale, if his favourite Sheep hath strayed, if his Pipe be broken, or *Phyllis* unkind? He answers, None of these Misfortunes have befallen him, but one much greater, for *Damon* (or sometimes the God *Pan*) is dead. This immediately causes the other to make Complaints, and call upon the lofty Pines and Silver Streams to join in the Lamentation. While he goes on, his Friend interrupts him, and tells him that *Damon* lives, and shows him a Track of Light in the Skies to confirm it; then invites him to Chesnuts and Cheese. Upon this Scheme most of the noble Families in *Great Britain* have been comforted; nor can I meet with any Right Honourable Shepherd that doth not die and live again, after the manner of the aforesaid *Damon*.'

yet I am sometimes induced to pity the poet, whose trade is thus to make demi-gods and heroes for a dinner. There is not in nature a more dismal figure than a man who sits down to premeditated flattery; every stanza he writes tacitly reproaches the meanness of
 5 his occupation, till at last his stupidity becomes more stupid, and his dulness more diminutive.

I am amazed therefore that none have yet found out the secret of flattering the worthless, and yet of preserving a safe conscience. I have often wished for some method by which a man might do him-
 10 self and his deceased patron justice, without being under the hateful reproach of self-conviction. After long lucubration, I have hit upon such an expedient; and send you the specimen of a poem upon the decease of a great man, in which the flattery is perfectly fine, and yet the poet perfectly innocent.

15 *On the death of the Right Honourable ***.*

Ye muses, pour the pitying tear
 For Pollio snatch'd away:
 O had he liv'd another year!
 —*He had not dy'd to-day.*

20 O, were he born to bless mankind,
 In virtuous times of yore,
 Heroes themselves had fallen behind!
 —*Whene'er he went before.*

25 How sad the groves and plains appear,
 And sympathetic sheep:
 Even pitying hills would drop a tear!
 —*If hills could learn to weep.*

30 His bounty in exalted strain
 Each bard might well display:
 Since none implor'd relief in vain!
 —*That went reliev'd away.*

35 And hark! I hear the tuneful throng
 His obsequies forbid.
 He still shall live, shall live as long
 —*As ever dead man did.*

LETTER CVII.¹

[The English too fond of believing every report, without examination. A story of an incendiary to this purpose.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

5

IT is the most usual method in every report, first to examine its probability, and then act as the conjuncture may require. The English, however, exert a different spirit in such circumstances; they first act, and, when too late, begin to examine. From a knowledge of this disposition, there are several here who make it their business to frame new reports at every convenient interval, all tending to denounce ruin both on their cotemporaries and their posterity. This denunciation is eagerly caught up by the public, away they fling to propagate the distress, sell out at one place, buy in at another, grumble at their governors, shout in mobs, and when they have thus for some time behaved like fools, sit down coolly to argue and talk wisdom, to puzzle each other with syllogism, and prepare for the next report that prevails, which is always attended with the same success.

10

15

Thus are they ever rising above one report only to sink into another. They resemble a dog in a well, pawing to get free. When he has raised his upper parts above water, and every spectator imagines him disengaged, his lower parts drag him down again and sink him to the nose; he makes new efforts to emerge, and every effort increasing his weakness, only tends to sink him the deeper.

25

There are some here, who, I am told, make a tolerable subsistence by the credulity of their countrymen; as they find the public fond of blood, wounds and death, they contrive political ruins suited to every month in the year; this month the people are to be eaten up by the French in flat-bottomed boats;² the next by the soldiers, designed to beat the French back; now the people are going to jump down the gulph of luxury, and now nothing but an herring subscription can fish them up again.³ Time passes on, the report proves

30

³⁰ flat-bottomed] 62; flat-bottom *PL*

³³ again. Time] 62; again; time *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 20 February 1761.

² See Letters V and LXIX.

³ Cf. 'On the Instability of Worldly Grandeur' in the *Bee*, No. VI: 'A few years ago the herring fishery employed all Grub-street; it was the topic in every coffee-house, and

false; new circumstances produce new changes, but the people never change, they are persevering in folly.

In other countries those boding politicians would be left to fret over their own schemes alone, and grow splenetic without hopes of
 5 infecting others: But England seems to be the very region where spleen delights to dwell; a man not only can give an unbounded scope to the disorder in himself, but may, if he pleases, propagate it over the whole kingdom, with a certainty of success. He has only to cry out, that the government, the government is all wrong, that
 10 their schemes are leading to ruin, that Britons are no more, every good member of the commonwealth thinks it his duty, in such a case, to deplore the universal decadence, with sympathetic sorrow, and by fancying the constitution in a decay, absolutely to impair its vigour.

15 This people would laugh at my simplicity, should I advise them to be less sanguine in harbouring gloomy predictions, and examine coolly before they attempted to complain. I have just heard a story, which, though transacted in a private family, serves very well to describe the behaviour of the whole nation, in cases of threatened
 20 calamity. As there are public, so there are private incendiaries here.¹ One of the last, either for the amusement of his friends, or to divert a fit of the spleen, lately sent a threatening letter to a worthy family in my neighbourhood, to this effect.

“SIR, Knowing you to be very rich, and finding myself to be very
 25 poor, I think proper to inform you, that I have learned the secret of poisoning man, woman, and child, without danger of detection. Don’t be uneasy, Sir, you may take your choice of being poisoned in a fortnight, or poisoned in a month, or poisoned in six weeks, you shall have full time to settle all your affairs. Though I’m poor, I love
 30 to do things like a gentleman. But, Sir, you must die, I have determined it within my own breast that you must die. Blood, Sir, blood

13 absolutely to] 62; they absolutely *PL*

20 here] 62; *om. PL*

21 the amusement of his friends] 62; his amusement *PL*

22 spleen] 62; spleen, or more probably for the joke sake *PL*

24 myself to be] 62; myself *PL*

the burthen of every ballad. We were to drag up *oceans* of gold from the bottom of the sea; we were to supply all Europe with herrings upon our own terms. At present, we hear no more of all this.’

¹ See the *Public Ledger* for 30 January 1760: ‘The old race of incendiaries, which infested this kingdom to the highest degree in 1730, seems to be rising again.’

is my trade, so I could wish you would this day six weeks, take leave of your friends, wife, and family, for I cannot possibly allow you longer time. To convince you more certainly of the power of my art, by which you may know I speak truth, take this letter; when you have read it, tear off the seal, fold it up, and give it to your favourite 5 Dutch mastiff that sits by the fire, he will swallow it, Sir, like a buttered toast, in three hours four minutes after he has taken it, he will attempt to bite off his own tongue, and half an hour after burst asunder in twenty pieces. Blood, blood, blood, so no more at present from, Sir, your most obedient, most devoted humble servant to 10 command till death."

You may easily imagine the consternation into which this letter threw the whole good natured family. The poor man to whom it was addressed, was the more surprized, as not knowing how he could merit such inveterate malice. All the friends of the family were 15 convened, it was universally agreed, that it was a most terrible affair, and that the government should be solicited to offer a reward and a pardon, a fellow of this kind would go on poisoning family after family, and it was impossible to say where the destruction would end. In pursuance of these determinations the government was 20 applied to, strict search was made after the incendiary, but all in vain. At last therefore they recollected that the experiment was not yet tried upon the dog; the Dutch mastiff was brought up, and placed in the midst of the friends and relations, the seal was torn off, the packet folded up with care, and soon they found to the 25 great surprize of all———, that the dog would not eat the letter.

Adieu.

11 death.] 62; death. Ebenezer Scragg. *PL*

14 as] 62; *om. PL*

15 of the family] 62; *om. PL*

18 would] 62; could *PL*

22 vain. At] 62; vain; at *PL*

23 dog; the] 62; dog. The *PL*

26 letter.] 62; letter. *They should have first tried the experiment before they had petitioned the King. PL*

LETTER CVIII.¹

[The utility and entertainment which might result from a journey into the East.]²

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

- 5 I HAVE frequently been amazed at the ignorance of almost all the European travellers, who have penetrated any considerable way eastward into Asia. They have been influenced either by motives of commerce or piety, and their accounts are such as might reasonably be expected from men of very narrow or very prejudiced
10 education, the dictates of superstition or the result of ignorance. Is it not surprizing, that in such a variety of adventurers not one single philosopher should be found; for as to the travels of Gemelli, the learned are long agreed that the whole is but an imposture.³

- There is scarce any country how rude or uncultivated soever,
15 where the inhabitants are not possessed of some peculiar secrets, either in nature or art, which might be transplanted with success; in Siberian Tartary, for instance, the natives extract a strong spirit from milk, which is a secret probably unknown to the chymists of Europe. In the most savage parts of India, they are possessed of the

1-4 LETTER CVIII . . . in *China*.] ESSAY XVIII. 65, 66

7 They have] 62; They have all *PL*, 65, 66

9 very narrow] 62; a very narrow *PL*, 65, 66

11 in] 62; of *PL*, 65, 66

12 found; for] 62; found among the number; for *PL*; found among the number? For 65, 66

14 uncultivated] 65, 66; incultivated *PL*, 62

17 in Siberian Tartary, for instance] 62; thus, for instance, in Siberian Tartary *PL*, 65, 66

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 27 February 1761.

² Goldsmith seems for many years to have projected such a journey himself (see Prior, *Life*, i. 317, 383-6), and he had argued for its utility in his review of Van Egmont and Heyman's *Travels* in the *Critical Review* for June 1759 (above, I, pp. 184-5). There are two other papers on the same subject that may possibly be by Goldsmith: the review of *Miscellaneous Tracts relating to Natural History, Husbandry, and Physick* in the *Critical Review*, vii (March 1759), 225-41 [= 33] (on the question of Goldsmith's authorship see *Modern Philology*, xliv [1946], 46-47), and the essay entitled 'Improvements and Discoveries that Might Attend a More Extensive Knowledge of Remote Countries' in the *Weekly Magazine* for 12 January 1760, pp. 53-55.

³ Cf. Du Halde, i. i: 'This [supplying by invention the want of information] appears to be the Method taken by a certain *Italian Traveller* who in a Book printed at *Naples* in 1720, entitled *Giro del Mondo*, . . . has given a particular Description of the Emperor of *China's* Palace; of which he cou'd have no Idea, but what his Fancy suggested. . . . The author is identified in a note as 'Dr. I. Francis Gemelli Careri'.

secret of dying vegetable substances scarlet; and likewise that of refining lead into a metal which, for hardness and colour, is little inferior to silver; not one of which secrets but would in Europe make a man's fortune. The power of the Asiatics in producing winds, or bringing down rain, the Europeans are apt to treat as fabulous, 5 because they have no instances of the like nature among themselves; but they would have treated the secrets of gunpowder, and the mariner's compass, in the same manner, had they been told the Chinese used such arts before the invention was common with themselves at home. 10

Of all the English philosophers I most reverence *Bacon*, that great and hardy genius; he it is who allows of secrets yet unknown; who undaunted by the seeming difficulties that oppose, prompts human curiosity to examine every part of nature, and even exhorts man to try whether he cannot subject the tempest, the thunder, and even 15 earthquakes to human controul: O did a man of his daring spirit, of his genius, penetration, and learning, travel to those countries which have been visited only by the superstitious and mercenary, what might not mankind expect; how would he enlighten the regions to which he travelled? And what a variety of knowledge and useful 20 improvement would he not bring back in exchange?

There is probably no country so barbarous, that would not disclose all it knew, if it received from the traveller equivalent information; and I am apt to think, that a person, who was ready to give more knowledge than he received, would be welcome wherever he 25 came. All his care in travelling should only be to suit his intellectual banquet to the people with whom he conversed; he should not attempt to teach the unlettered Tartar astronomy, nor yet instruct the polite Chinese in the ruder arts of subsistence; he should endeavour to improve the Barbarian in the secrets of living comfortably; 30 and the inhabitant of a more refined country in the speculative pleasures of science. How much more nobly would a philosopher thus employed spend his time, than by sitting at home earnestly intent upon adding one star more to his catalogue; or one monster

1 likewise that] 65, 66; *om. PL*, 62

12 who allows . . . yet unknown;] 62; *om. PL*, 65, 66

16 controul:] *PL*, 62; controul. 65, 66 did] 62; had *PL*, 65, 66

17 travel] 62; travelled *PL*, 65, 66

18 and] 62-66; or *PL*

23 from the traveller] 62; *om. PL*, 65, 66

29 ruder] 62; *om. PL*, 65, 66

more to his collection; or still, if possible, more triflingly sedulous in the incatenation of fleas, or the sculpture of a cherry stone.

I never consider this subject, without being surprized that none of those societies so laudably established in England for the promotion of arts and learning, have ever thought of sending one of their members into the most eastern parts of Asia, to make what discoveries he was able. To be convinced of the utility of such an undertaking, let them but read the relations of their own travellers. It will there be found, that they are as often deceived themselves, as they attempt to deceive others. The merchants tell us perhaps the price of different commodities, the methods of baling them up, and the properest manner for an European to preserve his health in the country. The missioner, on the other hand, informs us, with what pleasure the country to which he was sent embraced christianity and the numbers he converted; what methods he took to keep Lent in a region where there was no fish, or the shifts he made to celebrate the rites of his religion, in places where there was neither bread nor wine; such accounts, with the usual appendage of marriages and funerals, inscriptions, rivers, and mountains, make up the whole of an European traveller's diary; but as to all the secrets of which the inhabitants are possessed, those are universally attributed to magic; and when the traveller can give no other account of the wonders he sees performed, he very contentedly ascribes them to the power of the devil.

It was an usual observation of *Boyle*, the English chymist, that if every artist would but discover what new observations occurred to him in the exercise of his trade, philosophy would thence gain innumerable improvements. It may be observed, with still greater justice, that if the useful knowledge of every country, howsoever barbarous, was gleaned by a judicious observer, the advantages would be inestimable. Are there not even in Europe, many useful inventions known or practised, but in one place? The instrument, as an example, for cutting down corn in Germany, is much more handy and expeditious, in my opinion, than the sickle used in

1 triflingly] *PL*-65; trifling 66

2 a cherry stone] 62; cherry stones *PL*, 65, 66

3 that] 65, 66; how *PL*, 62

5 ever] 65, 66; never *PL*, 62

23 the power of] 62; *om.* *PL*, 65, 66

31 inestimable. Are] 62-66; inestimable; are *PL*

32 place? The] 62; place; their *PL*; place? Their 65, 66

England. The cheap and expeditious manner of making vinegar without previous fermentation, is known only in a part of France. If such discoveries therefore, remain still to be known at home; what funds of knowledge might not be collected, in countries yet unexplored, or only passed through by ignorant travellers in hasty 5 caravans.

The caution with which foreigners are received in Asia, may be alledged as an objection to such a design. But how readily have several European merchants found admission into regions the most suspecting, under the character of *Sanjapins*, or northern pilgrims; 10 to such not even China itself denies access.

To send out a traveller, properly qualified for these purposes, might be an object of national concern; it would in some measure repair the breaches made by ambition; and might shew that there were still some who boasted a greater name than that of patriots, 15 who professed themselves lovers of men. The only difficulty would remain in chusing a proper person, for so arduous an enterprize. He should be a man of a philosophical turn, one apt to deduce consequences of general utility from particular occurrences, neither swollen with pride, nor hardened by prejudice, neither wedded to 20 one particular system, nor instructed only in one particular science; neither wholly a botanist, nor quite an antiquarian; his mind should be tinctured with miscellaneous knowledge, and his manners humanized by an intercourse with men. He should be in some measure, an enthusiast to the design; fond of travelling from a rapid 25 imagination, and an innate love of change, furnished with a body capable of sustaining every fatigue, and an heart not easily terrified at danger. Adieu.

10 suspecting] 62; suspicious *PL*, 65, 66

16 The] *PL*, 62; *par.* 65, 66

27 an heart] *PL*, 62; a heart 65, 66

28 Adieu.] *PL*, 62; *om.* 65, 66

LETTER CIX.¹

[The Chinese philosopher attempts to find out famous men.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

- 5 ONE of the principal tasks I had proposed to myself on my arrival here, was to become acquainted with the names and characters of those now living, who as scholars or wits, had acquired the greatest share of reputation. In order to succeed in this design, I fancied the surest method would be to begin my enquiry among
10 the ignorant, judging that his fame would be greatest, which was loud enough to be heard by the vulgar. Thus predisposed, I began the search, but only went in quest of disappointment and perplexity. I found every district had a peculiar famous man of its own. Here the story-telling shoemaker had engrossed the admiration of one side of
15 the street, while the bellman, who excelled at a catch, was in quiet possession of the other. At one end of a lane the sexton was regarded as the greatest man alive, but I had not travelled half its length, till I found an enthusiast teacher had divided his reputation. My landlady perceiving my design, was kind enough to offer me her advice
20 in this affair. It was true, she observed, that she was no judge, but she knew what pleased herself, and if I would rest upon her judgment, I should set down Tom Collins as the most ingenious man in the world, for Tom was able to take off all mankind, and imitate besides a sow and pigs to perfection.
- 25 I now perceived, that taking my standard of reputation among the vulgar, would swell my catalogue of great names above the size of a Court Calendar, I therefore discontinued this method of pursuit, and resolved to prosecute my enquiry in that usual residence of fame a bookseller's shop. In consequence of this, I entreated the
30 bookseller to let me know who were they who now made the greatest figure either in morals, wit, or learning. Without giving me a direct answer, he pulled a pamphlet from the shelf, *The Young Attorney's Guide*; there Sir, cries he, there's a touch for you, fifteen hundred

14 of one] *PL*; on one *62*

15 excelled] *PL*; excelleth *62*

16 sexton] *62*; Parson of the parish *PL*

19 advice] *62*; little advice *PL*

20 judge, but] *62*; critic, yet *PL*

of these moved off in a day, I take the author of this pamphlet either for title, preface, plan, body, or index, to be the completest hand in England. I found it was vain to prosecute my enquiry, where my informer appeared so incompetent a judge of merit, so paying for the *Young Attorney's Guide*, which good manners obliged me to buy, I 5 walked off.

My pursuit after famous men now brought me into a print-shop. Here thought I, the painter only reflects the public voice. As every man who deserved it had formerly his statue placed up in the Roman forum, so here probably the pictures of none but such as merit a 10 place in our affections are held up for public sale. But guess my surprize when I came to examine this depository of noted faces; all distinctions were levelled here, as in the grave, and I could not but regard it as the catacomb of real merit. The brick dust man took up as much room as the truncheoned hero, and the Judge was elbowed 15 by the thief taker; quacks, pimps, and buffoons encreased the groupe, and noted stallions only made room for more noted whores. I had read the works of some of the moderns previous to my coming to England, with delight and approbation, but I found their faces had no place here, the walls were covered with the names of authors I 20 had never known, or had endeavoured to forget; with the little self-advertising things of a day, who had forced themselves into fashion, but not into fame; I could read at the bottom of some pictures, the names of **, and ***, and ****, all equally candidates for the vulgar shout, and foremost to propagate their unblushing faces upon 25 brass. My uneasiness therefore at not finding my few favourite names among the number was now changed into congratulation; I could not avoid reflecting on the fine observation of Tacitus on a similar occasion. In this cavalcade of flattery, cries the historian, neither the pictures of Brutus, Cassius, nor Cato, were to be seen, 30 *clariores quia imagines eorum non deferebantur*,¹ their absence being the strongest proof of their merit.

It is in vain, cried I, to seek for true greatness among these monuments of the unburied dead; let me go among the tombs of those who are confessedly famous, and see if any have been lately deposited 35

1 a day] 62; one day PL

13 were] 62; seemed to be PL

18-19 to England] 62; into England PL

- there, who deserve the attention of posterity, and whose names may be transmitted to my distant friend, as an honour to the present age. Determined in my pursuit, I paid a second visit to Westminster Abbey. There I found several new monuments erected to the
 5 memory of several great men; the names of the great men I absolutely forget, but I well remember that Roubillac was the statuary who carved them. I could not help smiling at two modern epitaphs in particular; one of which praised the deceased for being *ortus ex antiqua stirpe*, the other commended the dead, because *hanc ædem*
 10 *suis sumptibus reedificavit*,¹ the greatest merit of one, consisted in his being descended from an illustrious house; the chief distinction of the other, that he had propped up an old house that was falling. Alas, alas, cried I, such monuments as these confer honour, not upon the great men but upon little Roubillac.
- 15 Hitherto disappointed in my enquiry after the great of the present age, I was resolved to mix in company, and try what I could learn among critics in coffee-houses; and here it was that I heard my favourite names talked of even with inverted fame. A gentleman of exalted merit, as a writer, was branded in general terms as a bad
 20 man; another of exquisite delicacy as a poet, was reproached for wanting good nature; a third was accused of free-thinking, and a fourth of having once been a player.² Strange, cried I, how unjust are mankind in the distribution of fame; the ignorant among whom I sought at first, were willing to grant, but incapable of distinguishing
 25 the virtues of those which deserve it, among those I now converse with, they know the proper objects of admiration, but mix envy with applause.

7 carved] 62; cut *PL* not] 62; not however *PL*

15 great] 62; famous men *PL*

18 even] 62; indeed, but mentioned *PL*

19 exalted] 62; acknowledged *PL*

22 of having] 62; for having *PL*

¹ These Latin phrases do not appear on any of the seven monuments in Westminster Abbey executed by Roubiliac, and I have not found them in a rapid reading of the hundreds of Latin inscriptions in E. W. Brayley's *The History and Antiquities of the Abbey Church of St. Peter, Westminster* (1823). Perhaps the first is Goldsmith's Latin equivalent for the statement on Roubiliac's monument for Admiral Sir Peter Warren that 'He derived his Descent from an antient Family . . .' (Brayley, ii. 205).

² The last person is probably Arthur Murphy; see 'A Resverie' in the *Bee* (above, I, p. 447, and note). Concerning the first three men one can do little more than guess; they may be—to mention other men characterized in 'A Resverie'—Smollett, Johnson, and Hume.

Disappointed so often, I was now resolved to examine those characters in person of whom the world talked so freely; by conversing with men of real merit I began to find out those characters which really deserved, though they strove to avoid, applause. I found the vulgar admiration entirely misplaced, and malevolence 5 without its sting. The truly great, possessed of numerous small faults, and shining virtues, preserve a sublime in morals as in writing. They who have attained an excellence in either commit numberless transgressions, observable to the meanest understanding. The ignorant critic and dull remarker can readily spy blemishes in eloquence or morals, whose sentiments are not sufficiently elevated 10 to observe a beauty; but such are judges neither of books nor of life; they can diminish no solid reputation by their censure, nor bestow a lasting character by their applause: In short, I found by my search, that such only can confer real fame upon others, who have merit 15 themselves to deserve it. Adieu.

LETTER CX.¹

[Some projects for introducing Asiatic employments into the courts of England.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China. 20

THERE are numberless employments in the courts of the Eastern Monarchs utterly unpractised and unknown in Europe. They have no such officers, for instance, as the Emperor's ear tickler, or tooth picker, they have never introduced at their courts the Mandarin appointed to bear the royal tobacco-box, or the grave 25 director of the imperial exertations in the seraglio. Yet I am surprised that the English have imitated us in none of these particulars, as they are generally pleased with every thing that comes from China,

2-6 by conversing . . . truly great,] 62; just what I expected was the result of my search, I found the truly great *PL*

7 shining virtues, preserve] 62; a few shining virtues; we have often observed my friend, that there is *PL*

7-8 writing. They] 62; writing, and that they *PL*

10 blemishes] 62; a blemish *PL*

12 but] 62; *om. PL*

21-22 the Eastern] 62; Eastern *PL*

24 their] *PL*; the 62

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 1 May 1761.

and excessively fond of creating new and useless employments. They have filled their houses with our furniture, their public gardens with our fire-works, and their very ponds with our fish; our courtiers, my friend, are the fish, and the furniture they should have imported, 5 our courtiers would fill up the necessary ceremonies of a court better than those of Europe, would be contented with receiving large salaries for doing little, whereas some of this country are at present discontented tho' they receive large sallaries for doing nothing.

I lately, therefore, had thoughts of publishing a proposal here, for 10 the admission of some new Eastern offices and titles into their court register. As I consider myself in the light of a Cosmopolite, I find as much satisfaction in scheming for the countries in which I happen to reside, as for that in which I was born.

The finest apartments in the palace of Pegu are frequently infested 15 with rats. These the religion of the country strictly forbids the people to kill. In such circumstances therefore they are obliged to have recourse to some great man of the court, who is willing to free the royal apartments even at the hazard of his salvation. After a weak Monarch's reign the quantity of court-vermin in every corner of the 20 palace is surprizing, but a prudent king and a vigilant officer soon drives them from their sanctuaries behind the matts and the tapestry, and effectually frees the court. Such an officer in England would in my opinion be serviceable at this juncture; for if, as I am told, the palace be old, much vermin must undoubtedly have taken refuge 25 behind the wainscot and hangings. A minister should therefore be invested with the title and dignities of Court-vermin killer, he should have full power either to banish, take, poison or destroy them, with enchantments, traps, ferrets, or ratsbane. He might be permitted to brandish his besom without remorse, and brush down every part of 30 the furniture, without sparing a single cobweb however sacred by long prescription. I communicated this proposal some days ago in a company of the first distinction, and enjoying the most honourable

6 would] 62; and would *PL*

7 whereas] 62; when *PL*

13 born.] 62; born. However I have discontinued the design, being apprehensive it might be ascribed to mercenary motives. Yet my conscience can bear witness, that I am quite disinterested, and tho' in the first place I have taken some pains to prove the necessity of a Court-vermin killer here, as in Pegu, yet be assured I am not much desirous of the title or employment either for myself, or my family, *PL*

18 salvation] 62; soul *PL*

30 however] 62; tho' *PL*

31 a] 62; om. *PL*

offices of the state. Among the number were the Inspector of Great Britain, Mr. Henriques the Director of the Ministry, Ben. Victor the Treasurer, John Lockman the secretary, and the Conductor of the Imperial Magazine.¹ They all acquiesced in the utility of my proposal, but were apprehensive it might meet with some obstructions from court upholsterers and chamber-maids, who would object to it from the demolition of the furniture, and the dangerous use of ferrets and ratsbane.

My next proposal is rather more general than the former, and might probably meet with less opposition. Though no people in the world flatter each other more than the English, I know none who understand the art less and flatter with such little refinement. Their panegyric like a Tartar feast is indeed served up with profusion, but their cookery is insupportable. A client here shall dress up a fricassee for his patron, that shall offend an ordinary nose before it enters the room. A town shall send up their address to a great minister, which shall prove at once a satire on the minister and themselves. If the favourite of the day sits, or stands, or sleeps, there are poets to put it into verse, and priests to preach it in the pulpit. In order therefore to free both those who praise, and those who are praised from a duty

3 John Lockman the secretary,] 62; *om. PL*

¹ The Inspector was John Hill, so called from a series of letters with that title that he contributed to the *London Advertiser* from 1751 to 1753. Goldsmith had ridiculed him in his essay 'A Resverie' in the *Bee* (see above, I, pp. 445-6, and notes).

Jacob Henriques during 1760 and 1761 advertised frequently in the *Public Ledger* his lottery schemes to raise supplies for the war. His pretensions appear in his advertisement in the number for 8 December 1760: 'Worthy Britons. I acquaint you with great pleasure that I hope my published two excellent lottery schemes, will this session of parliament take place. Many people say, that I would save this nation at last, but I say that God, our excellent King, both his honourable houses of parliament, and his very worthy government will save this nation. Be it so. Amen. JACOB HENRIQUES. Born 1683.'

Benjamin Victor was treasurer of Drury Lane Theatre.

John Lockman was secretary to the Free British Fishery; he had promoted the 'herring subscription' mentioned in Letter CVII.

It may be noted that these four men all had some very vague connexion with the court. Hill had dedicated a work to the king (see above, I, p. 446, n. 2). Henriques advertised in the *Public Ledger* for 13 November 1760 that 'I had the great Honour and Pleasure (never before greater) to kiss the blessed hand of our most gracious new Sovereign, and deliver to him my published two excellent Lottery Schemes'. Victor had been poet laureate of Ireland. And in *ibid.* for 29 January 1761 was advertised 'Verses on the Demise of the late King, and the Accession of his present Majesty. Most humbly addressed and presented to his Majesty at St. James's. By John LOCKMAN, Secretary to the Free British Fishery.'

The conductor of the *Imperial Magazine* (1760-2) has not been identified.

probably disagreeable to both, I would constitute professed flatterers here as in several courts of India. These are appointed in the courts of their Princes, to instruct the people where to exclaim with admiration, and where to lay an emphasis of praise. But an officer
 5 of this kind is always in waiting when the Emperor converses in a familiar manner among his Rajas and other nobility. At every sentence, when the Monarch pauses, and smiles at what he has been saying; the Karamat man, as this officer is called, is to take it for granted, that his Majesty has said a good thing. Upon which he cries
 10 out Karamat! Karamat! a miracle, a miracle, and throws up his hands and his eyes in exstacy. This is ecchoed by the courtiers around, while the Emperor sits all this time, in sullen satisfaction, enjoying the triumph of his joke, or studying a new repartee.

I would have such an officer placed at every great man's table in
 15 England. By frequent practice he might soon become a perfect master of the art, and in time would turn out pleasing to his patron, no way troublesome to himself, and might prevent the nauseous attempts of many more ignorant pretenders. The clergy here I am convinced would relish this proposal. It would provide places for
 20 several of them. And indeed by some of their late productions many appear to have qualified themselves as candidates for this office already.

But my last proposal I take to be of the utmost importance. Our neighbour the Empress of Russia has, you may remember, instituted
 25 an order of female knighthood.¹ The Empress of Germany has also instituted another, the Chinese have had such an order time immemorial. I am amazed the English have never come into such an institution. When I consider what kind of men are made knights here, it appears strange, that they have never conferred this honour
 30 upon women. They make cheesemongers and pastrycooks Knights;

4 an emphasis] 62; the emphasis *PL*

10 miracle, and] 62; miracle, a miracle, and *PL*

11 his eyes] 62; eyes *PL*

13 or studying a new repartee] 62; and studying new ones *PL*

14-15 in England] 62; here *PL*

16 turn out] 62; certainly be *PL*

19 would relish] 62; will relish *PL*

27 immemorial.] 62; immemorial, *PL*

28 what kind of men] 62; the kind of men that *PL*

29 that] 62; *om. PL*

then why not their wives! They have called up tallow chandlers to maintain the hardy profession of chivalry and arms; then why not their wives. Haberdashers are sworn, as I suppose all Knights must be sworn, *never to fly in time of mellay or battle, to maintain and uphold the noble estate of chivalry, with horse harnishe and other Knightlye habiliments.* Haberdashers I say are sworn to all this, then why not their wives. Certain I am their wives understand fighting and feats of mellay and battle better than they, and as for Knightlye horse and harnishe, 'tis probable both know nothing more than the harness of a one horse chaise. No, no, my friend instead of conferring any order upon the husbands, I would knight their wives. However the State should not be troubled with a new institution upon this occasion. Some ancient exploded order might be revived, which would furnish both a motto and a name, the ladies might be permitted to chuse for themselves. There are for instance the obsolete orders of the *Dragon* in Germany, of the *Rue* in Scotland, and the *Porcupine* in France, all well sounding names, and very applicable to my intended female institution. Adieu.

LETTER CXI.¹

[On the different sects in England, particularly methodism.]

20

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

RELIGIOUS Sects in England are far more numerous than in China. Every man who has interest enough to hire a conventicle here, may set up for himself and sell off a new religion. The sellers of the newest pattern at present give extreme good bargains; and let their disciples have a great deal of *confidence* for very little money.

25

Their shops are much frequented, and their customers every day encreasing, for people are naturally fond of going to Paradise at as small expence as possible.

30

Yet you must not conceive this modern sect as differing in opinion

9 'tis] *PL*; it is 62

15 for themselves] 62; *om. PL*

31 expence as possible] 62; an expence as they can *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Wednesday, 11 March 1761.

- from those of the established religion: Difference of opinion indeed formerly divided their sectaries, and sometimes drew their armies to the field. White gowns and black mantles, flapped hats and cross pocket holes were once the obvious causes of quarrel; men then had
 5 some reason for fighting, they knew what they fought about; but at present they are arrived at such refinement in religion making, that they have actually formed a new sect without a new opinion; they quarrel for opinions they both equally defend; they hate each other, and that is all the difference between them.
- 10 But though their principles are the same, their practice is somewhat different. Those of the established religion laugh, when they are pleased, and their groans are seldom extorted but by pain or danger. The new sect, on the contrary weep for their amusement, and use little music except a chorus of sighs and groans, or tunes
 15 that are made to imitate groaning. Laughter is their aversion; lovers court each other from the lamentations; the bridegroom approaches the nuptial couch in sorrowful solemnity, and the bride looks more dismal than an undertaker's shop. Dancing round the room is with them running in a direct line to the devil; and as for gaming, though
 20 but in jest, they would sooner play with a rattle snake's tail, than finger a dice box.

By this time you perceive that I am describing a sect of Enthusiasts, and you have already compared them with the Faquirs, Bramins, and Talapoins¹ of the East. Among these you know are generations that
 25 have been never known to smile, and voluntary affliction makes up all the merit they can boast of. Enthusiasms in every country produce the same effects; stick the Faquir with pins, or confine the Bramin to a vermin hospital, spread the Talapoin on the ground, or load the Sectary's brow with contrition; those worshippers who dis-
 30 card the light of reason, are ever gloomy; their fears increase in proportion to their ignorance, as men are continually under apprehensions who walk in darkness.

Yet there is still a stronger reason for the enthusiast's being an enemy to laughter, namely, his being himself so proper an object of
 35 ridicule. It is remarkable that the propagators of false doctrines have

8 quarrel] 62; scold PL equally defend] 62; maintain PL

23 the Faquirs] 62; Faquirs PL

¹ See d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises*, lettre cxxxiii (v. 152-3): 'Les Talapoins sont les Prêtres & les Docteurs des Siamois, qui les regardent comme les vrais imitateurs de la Divinité.'

ever been averse to mirth, and always began by recommending gravity, when they intended to disseminate imposture. Fohi, the idol of China is represented as having never laughed; Zoroaster the leader of the Bramins is said to have laughed but twice, upon his coming into the world, and upon his leaving it;¹ and Mahomet himself, though a lover of pleasure, was a professed opposer of gaiety. Upon a certain occasion telling his followers, that they would all appear naked at the resurrection, his favourite wife represented such an assembly as immodest and unbecoming. Foolish woman, cried the grave prophet, though the whole assembly be naked, on that day they shall have forgotten to laugh.² Men like him opposed ridicule, because they knew it to be a most formidable antagonist, and preached up gravity, to conceal their own want of importance.

Ridicule has ever been the most powerful enemy of enthusiasm, and probably the only antagonist that can be opposed to it with success. Persecution only serves to propagate new religions; they acquire fresh vigour beneath the executioner and the ax, and like some vivacious insects, multiply by dissection. It is also impossible to combat enthusiasm with reason, for though it makes a shew of resistance, it soon eludes the pressure, refers you to distinctions not to be understood, and feelings which it cannot explain. A man who would endeavour to fix an enthusiast by argument, might as well attempt to spread quicksilver with his fingers. The only way to conquer a visionary is to despise him; the stake, the faggot, and the disputing Doctor, in some measure ennoble the opinions they are brought to oppose; they are harmless against innovating pride; contempt alone is truly dreadful. Hunters generally know the most vulnerable part of the beasts they pursue, by the care which every animal takes to defend the side which is weakest; on what side the

¹ began] *PL*; begin 62

¹¹ to laugh] 62; laughter *PL*

¹⁵ probably] *PL*; properly 62

²¹ explain.] 62; explain: *PL*

¹ See Bayle's *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (Rotterdam, 1720), p. 2926: 'On rapporte que Zoroastre se mit à rire le même jour qu'il nâquit, & qu'il est le seul de tous les hommes à qui cela soit arrivé . . .'; and there is a reference to 'Plinius, *Libr. VII, Cap. XVI*'.

² This anecdote is from Voltaire's *Dictionnaire philosophique*, art. 'Alcoran', sect. 2 (first published in 1748): 'Il est dit que comme il [Mahomet] annonçait qu'on ressusciterait tout nu, Aïshca sa femme trouva la chose immodeste et dangereuse: "Allez, ma bonne, lui dit-il, on n'aura pas alors envie de rire"' (*Œuvres complètes*, ed. Moland, xvii [Paris, 1878], 104). See J. E. Brown, *Modern Philology*, xxiii (1926), 280.

enthusiast is most vulnerable, may be known by the care which he takes in the beginning to work his disciples into gravity, and guard them against the power of ridicule.

When Philip the Second was King of Spain, there was a contest
 5 in Salamanca between two orders of friars for superiority. The legend
 of one side contained more extraordinary miracles, but the legend of
 the other was reckoned most authentic. They reviled each other, as
 is usual in disputes of divinity, the people were divided into factions,
 and a civil war appeared unavoidable. In order to prevent such an
 10 imminent calamity, the combatants were prevailed upon to submit
 their legends to the fiery trial, and that which came forth untouched
 by the fire, was to have the victory, and to be honoured with a
 double share of reverence. Whenever the people flock to see a miracle,
 it is an hundred to one, but that they see a miracle; incredible there-
 15 fore were the numbers that were gathered round upon this occasion;
 the friars on each side approached, and confidently threw their
 respective legends into the flames, when lo to the utter disappoint-
 ment of all the assembly, instead of a miracle, both legends were
 consumed. Nothing but thus turning both parties into contempt,
 20 could have prevented the effusion of blood. The people now laughed
 at their former folly, and wondered why they fell out. Adieu.

LETTER CXII.¹

[An election described.]

25 *From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial
 Academy at Peking, in China.*

THE English are at present employed in celebrating a feast
 which becomes general every seventh year; the Parliament of
 the nation being then dissolved and another appointed to be chosen.²

8 of divinity] 62; about divinity *PL*

11 legends] *PL*; legions 62

14-15 therefore] 62; *om. PL*

16 on] 62; of *PL*

17 legends into] 62; legend in *PL*

19-20 Nothing but . . . of blood.] 62; *om. PL*

27-28 Parliament of the nation] 62; old Parliament *PL*

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Friday, 3 April 1761.

² Parliament had been dissolved on 21 March 1761. The election in some country districts took place as early as 25 March; in others it had not yet taken place when this letter appeared. The poll in London ended the day before the publication of the letter.

This solemnity falls infinitely short of our feast of the lanthorns in magnificence and splendour; it is also surpassed by others of the East in unanimity and pure devotion, but no festival in the world can compare with it for eating. Their eating indeed amazes me: Had I five hundred heads, and were each head furnished with brains, yet 5 would they all be insufficient to compute the number of cows, pigs, geese and turkies, which upon this occasion die for the good of their country!

To say the truth, eating seems to make a grand ingredient in all English parties of zeal, business or amusement. When a Church is 10 to be built, or an Hospital endowed, the Directors assemble, and instead of consulting upon it, they eat upon it, by which means the business goes forward with success. When the Poor are to be relieved, the officers appointed to dole out public charity, assemble and eat upon it:¹ Nor has it ever been known, that they filled the bellies of 15 the poor till they had previously satisfied their own. But in the election of Magistrates the people seem to exceed all bounds; the merits of a candidate are often measured by the number of his treats; his constituents assemble, eat upon him, and lend their applause, not to his integrity or sense, but the quantities of his beef and brandy. 20

And yet I could forgive this people their plentiful meals on this occasion, as it is extremely natural for every man to eat a great deal when he gets it for nothing; but what amazes me is, that all this good living no way contributes to improve their good humour. On the contrary, they seem to lose their temper as they lose their appetites; 25 every morsel they swallow, and every glass they pour down serves to encrease their animosity. Many an honest man, before as harmless as a tame rabbit, when loaded with a single election dinner, has become more dangerous than a charged culverin. Upon one of these occasions, I have actually seen a bloody minded Man Milliner sally 30 forth at the head of a mob, determined to face a desperate Pastry Cook, who was General of the opposite party.

6 pigs] 62; sheep, pigs *PL*

11 an] 62; *om. PL*

31 desperate] 62; *om. PL*

¹ The reference is to the annual 'feasts' of the charitable institutions. On the same page of the *Public Ledger* as this letter appears a typical advertisement: '*London Hospital, March 9, 1761. The Anniversary Feast of the Governors of this Charity, will be held at Merchant Taylors Hall . . . on Wednesday the 29th Instant, after a Sermon preached by the Right Reverend Father in God RICHARD Lord Bishop of PETERBOROUGH. . . . Feast Tickets to be had at the following Coffee-Houses, at 5s. each. . . .*'

But you must not suppose they are without a pretext for thus beating each other. On the contrary, no man here is so uncivilized as to beat his neighbour without producing very sufficient reasons. One candidate, for instance, treats with gin, a spirit of their own
 5 manufacture; another always drinks brandy imported from abroad. Brandy is a wholesome liquor; gin a liquor wholly their own. This then furnishes an obvious cause of quarrel, Whether it be most reasonable to get drunk with gin, or get drunk with brandy? The mob meet upon the debate; fight themselves sober; and then draw
 10 off to get drunk again, and charge for another encounter. So that the English may now properly be said to be engaged in war; since while they are subduing their enemies abroad, they are breaking each other's heads at home.

I lately made an excursion to a neighbouring village, in order to
 15 be a spectator of the ceremonies practised upon this occasion. I left town in company with three fidlers, nine dozen of hams, and a corporation poet, which were designed as reinforcements to the gin-drinking party. We entered the town with a very good face; the fidlers, no way intimidated by the enemy, kept handling their arms
 20 up the principal street. By this prudent manœuvre they took peaceable possession of their head-quarters, amidst the shouts of multitudes, who seemed perfectly rejoiced at hearing their music, but above all at seeing their bacon.

I must own I could not avoid being pleased to see all ranks of
 25 people on this occasion, levelled into an equality, and the poor, in some measure, enjoying the primitive privileges of nature. If there was any distinction shewn, the lowest of the people seemed to receive it from the rich. I could perceive a cobbler with a levee at his door, and an haberdasher giving audience from behind his counter. But my
 30 reflections were soon interrupted by a mob, who demanded whether I was for the Distillery, or the Brewery? as these were terms with which I was totally unacquainted, I chose at first to be silent; however, I know not what might have been the consequence of my reserve, had not the attention of the mob been called off to a skirmish
 35 between a Brandy-drinker's cow, and a Gin-drinker's mastiff, which

4 candidate] 62; part of a village *PL*

treats with] 62; drinks *PL*

7 quarrel,] 62; quarrel. *PL*

8 or] 62; or to *PL*

8-9 The mob] 62; They *PL*

15 occasion.] 62; occasion; *PL*

20 this] 62; which *PL*

turned out greatly to the satisfaction of the mob, in favour of the mastiff.

This spectacle, which afforded high entertainment, was at last ended by the appearance of one of the candidates; who came to harrangue the mob; he made a very pathetic speech upon the late 5 excessive importation of foreign drams; and the downfall of the distillery: I could see some of the audience shed tears. He was accompanied in his procession by Mrs. Deputy and Mrs. Mayoress. Mrs. Deputy was not in the least in liquor; and as for Mrs. Mayoress one of the spectators assured me in my ear that,——She was a very 10 fine woman before she had the small-pox.

Mixing with the croud, I was now conducted to the hall where the magistrates are chosen; but what tongue can describe this scene of confusion; the whole crowd seemed equally inspired with anger, jealousy, politics, patriotism and punch: I remarked one figure that 15 was carried up by two men upon this occasion. I at first began to pity his infirmities as natural, but soon found the fellow so drunk that he could not stand; another made his appearance to give his vote, but though he could stand, he actually lost the use of his tongue, and remained silent; a third, who though excessively drunk could both 20 stand and speak; being asked the Candidate's name for whom he voted, could be prevailed upon to make no other answer, but Tobacco and Brandy. In short, an election-hall seems to be a theatre where every passion is seen without disguise; a school where fools may readily become worse, and where philosophers may gather 25 wisdom. Adieu.

1-2 satisfaction of . . . the mastiff] 62; advantage of the latter *PL*

3 entertainment] 62; satisfaction *PL*

9 in the least] 62; the least bit *PL* as] *PL*; *om.* 62

16 occasion.] 62; occasion; *PL*

19 actually] 62; had actually *PL*

22 make] 62; return *PL*

23 Brandy] 62; Brandy for ever *PL*

LETTER CXIII.¹

[A literary contest, of great importance. In which both sides fight by epigram.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

5 **T**HE disputes among the learned here are now carried on in a much more compendious manner than formerly. There was a time when folio was brought to oppose folio, and a champion was often listed for life under the banners of a single sorites. At present, the controversy is decided in a summary way; an epigram or an
10 acrostic finishes the debate, and the combatant, like the incursive Tartar, advances, and retires with a single blow.

An important literary debate at present engrosses the attention of the town. It is carried on with sharpness, and a proper share of this epigrammatical fury. An author, it seems has taken an aversion to
15 the faces of several players; and has written verses to prove his dislike; the players fall upon the author and assure the town he must be dull, and their faces must be good, because he wants a dinner; a critic comes to the poet's assistance, asserting, that the verses were perfectly original, and so smart that he could never have written
20 them without the assistance of friends;² the friends upon this arraign the critic, and plainly prove the verses to be all the author's own. So at it they are all four together by the ears, the friends at the critic, the critic at the players, the players at the author, and the author at the players again. It is impossible to determine how this many sided con-
25 test will end, or which party to adhere to. The town, without siding with any, views the combat in suspense, like the fabled hero of antiquity, who beheld the earth-born brothers give and receive mutual wounds, and fall by indiscriminate destruction.

This is in some measure a state of the present dispute; but the

18 comes] 62; comes up PL

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 14 April 1761.

² The poem is Charles Churchill's *The Rosciad*. It had appeared anonymously as 'By the Author' a month before the publication of this letter (see the *Daily Advertiser* for 13 March 1761); a second edition with the author's name was published a few days before the letter (*ibid.* for 9 April). The criticism referred to is no doubt the one in the *Critical Review* for March 1761 (xi. 209-12); there, after suggesting that Robert Lloyd was the author, the reviewer continues: 'We will not pretend, however, absolutely to assert, that Mr. L—— wrote this poem; but we may venture to affirm, that it is the production, jointly or separately, of the new triumvirate of wits, who never let an opportunity slip of singing their own praises.'

combatants here differ in one respect from the champions of the fable. Every new wound only gives vigour for another blow, tho' they appear to strike they are in fact mutually swelling themselves into consideration, and thus advertising each other away into fame. To-day says one, my name shall be in the Gazette, the next day my rival's; people will naturally enquire about us; thus we shall at least make a noise in the streets, though we have got nothing to sell. I have read of a dispute of a similar nature, which was managed here about twenty years ago. Hildebrand Jacob, as I think he was called, and Charles Johnson were poets, both at that time possessed of great reputation, for Johnson had written eleven plays acted with great success, and Jacob, tho' he had written but five, had five times thanked the town for their unmerited applause. They soon became mutually enamoured of each others talents; they wrote, they felt, they challenged the town for each other. Johnson assured the public that no poet alive had the easy simplicity of Jacob, and Jacob exhibited Johnson as a master-piece in the pathetic. Their mutual praise was not without effect, the town saw their plays, were in raptures, read, and without censuring them, forgot them. So formidable an union however, was soon opposed by Tibbald. Tibbald asserted that the tragedies of one had faults, and the comedies of the other substituted wit for vivacity; the combined champions flew at him like tygers, arraigned the censor's judgment; and impeached his sincerity. It was a long time a dispute among the learned, which was in fact the greatest man, Jacob, Johnson, or Tibbald; they had all written for the stage with great success, their names were seen in almost every paper, and their works in every coffee-house. However in the hottest of the dispute, a fourth combatant made his appearance, and swept away the three combatants, tragedy, comedy, and all into undistinguished ruin.¹

From this time they seemed consigned into the hands of criticism.

5-7 To-day says . . . to sell.] 62; *om.* *PL*

22 flew] 62; immediately flew *PL*

27 works] 62; faces *PL*

31-1 (p. 438) criticism. Scarce] *PL*; criticism, scarce 62

¹ It would be interesting to know whether Goldsmith had any authority for this account; all the works I have consulted, both contemporary and modern, suggest no relationship between Jacob, Johnson, and Theobald. And the whole account seems improbable; Jacob, for example, had produced only one play before Johnson's dramatic career ended in 1732, and his only other plays were acted in 1738, the year before his death.

Scarce a day passed in which they were not arraigned as detested writers. The critics, these enemies of Dryden and Pope, were their enemies. So Jacob and Johnson, instead of mending by criticism, called it envy, and because Dryden and Pope were censured, they
5 compared themselves to Dryden and Pope.

But to return; the weapon chiefly used in the present controversy is Epigram, and certainly never was a keener made use of. They have discovered surprising sharpness on both sides. The first that came out upon this occasion was a kind of new composition in this way,
10 and might more properly be called an epigrammatic thesis, than an Epigram. It consists, first, of an argument in prose; next follows a motto from Roscommon; then comes the Epigram; and lastly, notes serving to explain the Epigram. But you shall have it with all its decorations.

15 *An EPIGRAM.*¹

Addressed to the Gentlemen reflected on in
the ROSCIAD, a Poem, by the Author.

*Worry'd with debts and past all hopes of bail,
His pen he prostitutes t' avoid a goal.*

20 ROSCOMMON.

“Let not the *hungry* Bavius’ angry stroke,
Awake resentment, or your rage provoke;
But pitying his distress, let virtue (1) shine,
And giving each your bounty, (2) *let him dine*;
25 For thus retain’d, as learned council can
Each case, however bad, he’ll new japan;
And by a quick transition, plainly show
’Twas no defect of your’s, but *pocket low*,
That caus’d his *putrid kennel* to o’erflow.” }
30

(1) Charity.

(2) Settled at One Shilling, the Price of the Poem.

The last lines are certainly executed in a very masterly manner. It

4 and because . . . censured, they] 62; and, from the similitude of censure, *PL*
32 lines are] 62; part of this Epigram is *PL*

¹ This epigram had appeared in just the same form ten days earlier in the *Public Ledger* for 4 April 1761. It is usually printed in Goldsmith’s poems, but there is no reason to think it is his unless he deliberately printed it earlier so that he could ridicule it here.

is of that species of argumentation, called the perplexing. It effectually flings the antagonist into a mist; there's no answering it; the laugh is raised against him while he is endeavouring to find out the jest. At once it shews, that the author has a kennel, and that this kennel is putrid, and that this putrid kennel overflows. But why does it overflow? It overflows, because the author happens to have low pockets!

There was also another new attempt in this way; a prosaic Epigram which came out upon this occasion. This is so full of matter, that a critic might split it into fifteen Epigrams, each properly fitted with its sting. You shall see it.

*To G. C. and R. L.*¹

" 'Twas you, or I, or he, or all together,
 'Twas one, both, three of them, they know not whether.
 This I believe, between us great or small,
 You, I, he, wrote it not——'twas Churchill's all."

There, there's a perplex! I could have wished, to make it quite perfect, the author, as in the case before, had added notes. Almost every word admits a scholium and a long one too. I, YOU, HE! Suppose a stranger should ask, and who are you? Here are three obscure persons spoken of that may in a short time be utterly forgotten. Their names should have consequently been mentioned in notes at the bottom. But when the reader comes to the words *great* and *small* the maze is inextricable. Here the stranger may dive for a mystery, without ever reaching the bottom. Let him know then that *small* is a word purely introduced to make good rhyme, and *great* was a very proper word to keep *small* company.

Yet by being thus a spectator of others dangers, I must own I begin to tremble in this literary contest for my own. I begin to fear

4 it shews] *PL*; he shews 62

8 There] 62; But it was impossible so good a thing could pass without a reply; a reply therefore it had, equally witty, poignant and severe. There *PL*

21 obscure persons] 62; persons evidently *PL*

21-22 forgotten. Their] 62; forgotten, and their *PL*

27 *small*] 62; no *italics PL*

¹ No earlier publication of these verses has been found. The initials stand for George Colman and Robert Lloyd, friends of Churchill and members of the 'triumvirate' referred to by the writer in the *Critical Review*. This piece has also been included in some editions of Goldsmith's poems, but his authorship appears doubtful.

that my challenge to Doctor Rock was unadvised,¹ and has procured me more antagonists than I had at first expected. I have received private letters from several of the literati here that fill my soul with apprehension. I may safely aver, that *I never gave any creature in this*
 5 *good city offence*, except only my rival Doctor Rock, yet by the letters I every day receive, and by some I have seen printed, I am arraigned at one time as being a dull fellow, at another as being pert; I am here petulant, there I am heavy; by the head of my ancestors, they treat me with more inhumanity than a flying fish. If I dive and run my
 10 nose to the bottom, there a devouring shark is ready to swallow me up; if I skim the surface, a pack of dolphins are at my tail to snap me; but when I take wing and attempt to escape them by flight, I become a prey to every ravenous bird, that winnows the bosom of the deep. Adieu.

15

LETTER CXIV.²[Against the marriage act.³ A Fable.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

20 **T**HE Formalities, delays and disappointments that precede a treaty of marriage here, are usually as numerous as those previous to a treaty of peace. The laws of this country are finely calculated to promote all commerce, but the commerce between the sexes. Their encouragements for propagating hemp, madder and tobacco, are indeed admirable! Marriages are the only commodity that meets
 25 with discouragement.

Yet from the vernal softness of the air, the verdure of the fields, the transparency of the streams, and the beauty of the women, I

¹ unadvised] 62; ill advised PL

¹¹ up] 62; om. PL

¹¹⁻¹² snap me] 62; snap me up PL

¹³⁻¹⁴ bosom of the deep] 62; air with its wing PL

¹⁵⁻¹⁸ LETTER CXIV. . . . in China.] ESSAY XXIII. 65, 66

²⁴⁻²⁵ Marriages are . . . with discouragement.] 62-66; But the genius of love is banished from hence, or has never been here. PL

²⁴ meets] 65, 66; meet 62

²⁵ discouragement] 66; none 62, 65

¹ See Letter LXVIII.

² In the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday, 21 April 1761.

³ With this letter compare Goldsmith's criticism of the marriage act in Letter LXXII.

know few countries more proper to invite to courtship. Here love might sport among painted lawns and warbling groves, and revel amidst gales, wafting at once both fragrance and harmony. Yet it seems he has forsaken the island; and when a couple are now to be married, mutual love or an union of minds is the last and most trifling consideration. If their goods and chattels can be brought to unite, their sympathetic souls are ever ready to guarantee the treaty. The gentleman's mortgaged lawn becomes enamoured of the ladies marriageable grove, the match is struck up, and both parties are piously in love—according to act of Parliament.

Thus they who have fortune are possessed at least of something that is lovely; but I actually pity those who have none. I am told there was a time when Ladies with no other merit but youth, virtue and beauty, had a chance for husbands, at least amongst our clergymen and officers. The blush and innocence of sixteen was said to have a powerful influence over these two professions. But of late all the little traffic of blushing, ogling, dimpling, and smiling, has been forbidden by an act in that case wisely made and provided. A Lady's whole cargo of smiles, sighs, and whispers is declared utterly contraband till she arrives in the warm latitudes of twenty-two, where commodities of this nature are too often found to decay. She is then permitted to dimple and smile, when the dimples begin to forsake her, and when perhaps grown ugly is charitably entrusted with an unlimited use of her charms. Her lovers, however, by this time have forsaken her; the captain has changed for another mistress; the priest himself leaves her in solitude, to bewail her virginity, and she dies even without benefit of clergy.

Thus you find the Europeans discouraging love with as much earnestness as the rudest savage of Sofala.¹ The genius is surely now

1 to courtship] 62-66; his stay *PL* love] 62-66; he *PL*

3 amidst] 65, 66; upon *PL*, 62

12 who] 66; that *PL*-65

14-15 amongst our clergymen and officers] 66; among the ministers of the church, or the officers of the army *PL*-65

20 latitudes] *PL*-65; latitude 66

22 dimples] 66; dimples and smiles *PL*-65

25-26 priest himself] 62-66; church itself *PL*

27 even] 62-66; *om. PL*

¹ Emanuel Bowen says of Sofala in Africa, 'The People are well shaped, though for the most part *Negroes*, few of them being of a brown Complexion. . . . They cover

no more. In every region there seem enemies in arms to oppress him. Avarice in Europe, jealousy in Persia, ceremony in China, poverty among the Tartars, and lust in Circassia, are all prepared to oppose his power. The Genius is certainly banished from earth, tho' once
 5 adored under such a variety of forms. He is no where to be found, and all that the Ladies of each country can produce, are but a few trifling reliques as instances of his former residence and favour.

The Genius of Love, says the eastern Apologue, had long resided in the happy plains of Abra, where every breeze was health, and
 10 every sound produced tranquility.¹ His temple at first was crowded, but every age lessened the number of his votaries, or cooled their devotion. Perceiving therefore his altars at length quite deserted, he was resolved to remove to some more propitious region, and he apprized the fair sex of every country where he could hope for a
 15 proper reception, to assert their right to his presence among them. In return to this proclamation, embassies were sent from the Ladies of every part of the world to invite him, and to display the superiority of their claims.

And first the beauties of China appeared. No country could compare with them for modesty, either of look, dress, or behaviour; their eyes were never lifted from the ground, their robes of the most beautiful silk hid their hands, bosom, and neck, while their faces only were left uncovered.² They indulged no airs that might express loose desire, and they seemed to study only the graces of inanimate
 25 beauty. Their black teeth and plucked eye-brows were however alledged by the Genius against them, but he set them entirely aside when he came to examine their little feet.

The beauties of Circassia next made their appearance. They advanced hand in hand, singing the most immodest airs, and leading
 30 up a dance in the most luxurious attitudes. Their dress was but half a covering; the neck, the left breast, and all the limbs were exposed

¹ there seem] 66; I find *PL*-65

² 27 little] 62-66; *om. PL*

themselves only from the Waist to the Knees with a Habit of Silk or Cotton . . .' (*A Complete System of Geography* [1747], ii. 501).

¹ Cf. 'Introduction' in the first number of the *Bee*: 'How gladly would I lead them [readers] . . . to prospects of innocence and ease, where every breeze breaths health, and every sound is but the echo of tranquility.'

² Cf. Du Halde, i. 282: ' . . . what adds much to the natural Charms of the *Chinese Ladies*, is the uncommon Modesty which appears in their Looks and Dress. Their Gowns are very long, and cover them from Head to Foot, so that nothing is seen but their Faces.'

to view, which after some time, seemed rather to satiate than inflame desire. The lily and the rose contended in forming their complexions, and a soft sleepiness of eye added irresistible poignance to their charms; but their beauties were obtruded, not offered to their admirers, they seemed to give rather than receive courtship,¹ and the genius of love dismissed them as unworthy his regard; since they exchanged the duties of love, and made themselves not the pursued, but the pursuing sex.

The kingdom of Kashmire next produced its charming deputies. This happy region seemed peculiarly sequestered by nature for his abode. Shady mountains fenced it on one side from the scorching sun, and seaborne breezes on the other, gave peculiar luxuriance to the air.² Their complexions were of a bright yellow, that appeared almost transparent, while the crimson tulip seemed to blossom on their cheeks. Their features and limbs were delicate, beyond the statuary's power to express; and their teeth whiter than their own ivory. He was almost persuaded to reside among them, when unfortunately one of the ladies talked of appointing his seraglio.

In this procession the naked inhabitants of Southern America would not be left behind; their charms were found to surpass whatever the warmest imagination could conceive, and served to shew, that beauty could be perfect, even with the seeming disadvantage of a brown complexion. But their savage education rendered them utterly unqualified to make the proper use of their power, and they

6 dismissed them] 62-66; set them aside *PL*

10 peculiarly] *PL*-65; peculiar 66

¹ Cf. the account of the appearance, dress, and conduct of Circassian women in Emanuel Bowen, ii. 168: '... they are very agreeable, being tall, well shaped, with a good Complexion, and very kind and familiar even to Strangers. They go bare-faced, and their Gowns are open before, so that their Breasts lie exposed to the view, and even some quite down to the Navel. Their Husbands have so great Confidence in their Fidelity, that they will trust them in the same Room with a Stranger, and withdraw with the greatest Complaisance; but should any Attempt be made on their Chastity in consequence of this Familiarity, it would be attended with Disappointment, and they would tell the Person that such a Breach of Faith would be followed with the severest Revenge; but will invite you to any other Liberty that comes short of Adultery, and expect some Presents suitable to the Occasion, and the length of their Complaisance.' A similar though less-detailed account, based on 'les voyages de Struys', appears in Buffon's *Histoire naturelle*, iii (1749), 435.

² Cf. the description of 'Cassimere' in Bowen, ii. 310: 'It enjoys a clear healthy Air, as temperate as any in *Europe*, . . . and so far exceeding all the neighbouring Sun-burnt Provinces, that *Catrou* says, 'tis stiled the *Paradise of India*. 'Tis surrounded by Mountains rising one above another. . . .'

were rejected as being incapable of uniting mental with sensual satisfaction. In this manner the deputies of other kingdoms had their suits rejected: the black beauties of Benin, and the tawny daughters of Borneo, the women of Wida with scarred faces, and the hideous
 5 virgins of Cafraria;¹ the squab ladies of Lapland, three feet high, and the giant fair ones of Patagonia.²

The beauties of Europe at last appeared, grace in their steps, and sensibility smiling in every eye. It was the universal opinion, while they were approaching, that they would prevail; and the genius
 10 seemed to lend them his most favourable attention. They opened their pretensions with the utmost modesty, but unfortunately as their orator proceeded she happened to let fall the words house in town, settlement and pin money. These seemingly harmless terms had instantly a surprising effect, the genius with ungovernable rage
 15 burst from amidst the circle, and waving his youthful pinions left this earth, and flew back to those ethereal mansions from whence he descended.

The whole assembly was struck with amazement, they now justly apprehended, that female power would be no more, since love had
 20 forsaken them. They continued some time thus in a state of torpid despair, when it was proposed by one of the number, that since the real genius of Love had left them, in order to continue their power, they should set up an idol in his stead; and that the ladies of every country should furnish him with what each liked best. This proposal
 25 was instantly relished and agreed to. An idol of gold was formed by uniting the capricious gifts of all the assembly, tho' no way resembling the departed genius. The ladies of China furnished the monster

¹ rejected as being] 62-66; set aside as *PL*

⁴ scarred] 65, 66; well scarred *PL*, 62 hideous] 62-66; ill perfumed *PL*

⁷ grace] 66; grace was *PL*-65

⁸ sensibility] 66; sensibility sate *PL*-65

¹²⁻¹³ house in town] 62-66; act of parliament *PL*

¹³ money. These] 62-66; money; these *PL*

¹⁵⁻¹⁶ left this earth, and] 62-66; *om. PL*

²² of Love] 65, 66; *om. PL*, 62

²⁴ each] 62-66; they *PL*

²⁵ to. An] 62-66; to, an *PL* of gold] 65, 66; *om. PL*, 62

²⁶ tho'] 62-66; but *PL*

¹ Goldsmith mentions the inhabitants of Benin and Cafraria in Letter LIII.

² See the account of Terra Magellanica in Bowen, ii. 548: '... those who have come hither since *Magellan*, have not given us much more satisfactory Accounts of this Country, except they agree in the gigantic Size of the Inhabitants, whom they call *Patagons*, and whom they affirm to go naked. ...'

with wings, those of Kashmire supplied him with horns, the dames of Europe clapped a purse into his hand, and the virgins of Congo furnished him with a tail. Since that time all the vows addressed to love are in reality paid to the idol; while as in other false religions the adoration seems most fervent, where the heart is least sincere.

Adieu.

LETTER CXV.¹

[On the danger of having too high an opinion of human nature.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

MANKIND have ever been prone to expatiate in the praise of human nature. The dignity of man is a subject that has always been the favourite theme of humanity; they have declaimed with that ostentation which usually accompanies such as are sure of having a partial audience, they have obtained victories because there were none to oppose. Yet from all I have ever read or seen, men appear more apt to err by having too high, than by having too despicable an opinion of their nature, and by attempting to exalt their original place in the creation, depress their real value in society.

The most ignorant nations have always been found to think most highly of themselves. The deity has ever been thought peculiarly concerned in their glory and preservation, to have fought their battles, and inspired their teachers, their wizzards are said to be familiar with heaven; and every hero has a guard of angels, as well as men to attend him. When the Portuguese first came among the wretched inhabitants of the coast of Africa; these savage nations readily allowed the strangers more skill in navigation and war, yet still considered them at best, but as useful servants brought to their coasts by their guardian serpent to supply them with luxuries they could have lived without. Though they could grant the Portuguese

² into] 66; in *PL*-65

⁴ while] 66; but *PL*, 62; and 65

⁶ Adieu.] *PL*, 62; *om.* 65, 66

¹⁵ a partial audience] 62; all the audience of their side *PL*

more riches; they could never allow them to have such a king as their Tottimondelem, who wore a bracelet of shells round his neck, and whose legs were covered with ivory.

In this manner, examine a savage in the history of his country and
 5 predecessors; you ever find his warriors able to conquer armies, and his sages acquainted with more than possible knowledge; human nature is to him an unknown country, he thinks it capable of great things because he is ignorant of its boundaries; whatever can be conceived to be done he allows to be possible, and whatever is
 10 possible he conjectures must have been done. He never measures the actions and powers of others by what himself is able to perform, nor makes a proper estimate of the greatness of his fellows by bringing it to the standard of his own incapacity. He is satisfied to be one of a country where mighty things have been, and imagines the fancied
 15 power of others reflects a lustre on himself. Thus by degrees he loses the idea of his own insignificance in a confused notion of the extraordinary powers of humanity, and is willing to grant extraordinary gifts to every pretender, because unacquainted with their claims.

This is the reason why Demi-gods and Heroes have ever been
 20 erected in times or countries of ignorance and barbarity; they addressed a people who had high opinions of human nature, because they were ignorant how far it could extend, they addressed a people who were willing to allow that men should be gods, because they were yet imperfectly acquainted with God, and with man. These
 25 impostors knew that all men are naturally fond of seeing something very great made from the little materials of humanity, that ignorant nations are not more proud of building a tower to reach heaven, or a pyramid to last for ages, than of raising up a Demi-god of their own country and creation. The same pride that erects a colossus or a
 30 pyramid, installs a God or an Hero; but tho' the adoring savage can raise his colossus to the clouds, he can exalt the Hero not one inch above the standard of humanity, incapable therefore of exalting the idol, he debases himself and falls prostrate before him.

4 In this manner, examine] 62; Examine *PL*

15 power] 62; powers *PL*

18 because unacquainted with their claims] 62; even to a power of commanding the ministry of heaven *PL*

24-25 These impostors] 62; They *PL*

29 The] 62; Yes, my friend, the *PL*

32-33 incapable therefore . . . before him] 62; he therefore falls upon his face to adore him, and incapable of exalting the idol, he debases himself *PL*

When man has thus acquired an erroneous idea of the dignity of his species, he and the Gods become perfectly intimate; men are but angels, angels are but men, nay but servants that stand in waiting to execute human commands. The Persians, for instance, thus address their Prophet Haly*. "I salute thee glorious Creator, of whom the sun is but the shadow. Master-piece of the Lord of human creatures, great star of justice and religion. The sea is not rich and liberal but by the gifts of thy munificent hands. The angel treasurer of heaven reaps his harvest in the fertile gardens of the purity of thy nature. The primum mobile would never dart the ball of the sun through the trunk of heaven, were it not to serve the morning out of the extreme love she has for thee. The angel Gabriel, messenger of truth, every day kisses the groundsil of thy gate. Were there a place more exalted than the most high throne of God, I would affirm it to be thy place, O master of the faithful; Gabriel with all his art and knowledge is but a mere scholar to thee." Thus, my friend, men think proper to treat angels, but if indeed there be such an order of beings, with what a degree of satirical contempt must they listen to the songs of little mortals thus flattering each other. Thus to see creatures, wiser indeed than the monkey, and more active than the oyster, claiming to themselves the mastery of heaven, minims, the tenants of an atom, thus arrogating a partnership in the creation of universal nature! Sure heaven is kind that launches no thunder at those guilty heads; but it is kind, and regards their follies with pity, nor will destroy creatures that it loved into being.

But whatever success this practice of making Demi-gods might have been attended with in barbarous nations, I dont know that any man became a god in a country where the inhabitants were refined.

* Chardin's Travels, p. 402.¹

1 thus acquired an erroneous] 62; once acquired a sufficient PL

22 thus] 62; om. PL

27 any] 62; ever any PL

¹ See *The Travels of Sir John Chardin into Persia and the East-Indies* (1686), i. 402 ff.: 'Round the Gallery of *Abas's* Tomb, runs a *Frize*, . . . wherein are written . . . the Elegies of the Famous *Haly*, the Great Saint and Idol of the Persians, made by the Learned *Hasan-Caza*. Of which I shall insert the Translation. . . . The whole is divided into seven Songs in Distichs, of which the first runs all upon Mahomet, and the other six all upon *Haly*.' Goldsmith runs together 'distichs' from the first, second, fourth, fifth, and sixth songs. And at the beginning of Goldsmith's quotation Chardin has '*Creature*' rather than '*Creator*'.

Such countries generally have too close an inspection into human weakness, to think it invested with celestial power. They sometimes indeed admit the Gods of strangers, or of their ancestors, which had their existence in times of obscurity, their weakness being forgotten, while nothing but their power and their miracles were remembered. The Chinese, for instance, never had a God of their own country, the idols which the vulgar worship at this day were brought from the barbarous nations around them. The Roman Emperors who pretended to divinity were generally taught by a Poignard that they were mortal, and Alexander, though he passed among barbarous countries for a real God, could never persuade his polite country men into a similitude of thinking. The Lacedemonians shrewdly complied with his commands by the following sarcastic edict,

*Εἰ Ἀλεξάνδρος Βθλεται εἶναι Θεός, Θεός ἐσώ.*¹

15 Adieu.

LETTER CXVI.²

[Whether love be a natural or a fictitious passion.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

20 **T**HERE is something irresistibly pleasing in the conversation of a fine woman, even though her tongue be silent, the eloquence of her eyes teaches wisdom. The mind sympathizes with the regularity of the object in view, and struck with external grace, vibrates into respondent harmony. In this agreeable disposition I
25 lately found myself in company with my friend and his niece. Our conversation turned upon love, which she seemed equally capable of defending and inspiring. We were each of different opinions upon this subject; the lady insisted that it was a natural and universal

3 which] 62; who PL

5 were] 62; are PL

6 Chinese, for instance,] 62; Chinese PL

11 for] 62; for being PL

13 sarcastic] 62; short PL

22 teaches] 62; gives lectures of PL

23 grace] 62; beauty PL

¹ Aelian, *Varia Historia* ii. 19.

² In the *Public Ledger* for Wednesday, 13 May 1761.

passion, and produced the happiness of those who cultivated it with proper precaution. My friend denied it to be the work of nature, but allowed it to have a real existence, and affirmed that it was of infinite service in refining society, while I, to keep up the dispute, affirmed it to be merely a name, first used by the cunning part of the fair sex, 5 and admitted by the silly part of ours, therefore no way more natural than taking snuff or chewing opium.

"How is it possible, cried I, that such a passion can be natural, when our opinions even of beauty which inspires it are entirely the result of fashion and caprice. The ancients, who pretended to be 10 connoisseurs in the art have praised narrow foreheads, red hair, and eyebrows that joined each other over the nose. Such were the charms that once captivated Catullus, Ovid and Anacreon. Ladies would at present be out of humour, if their lovers praised them for such 15 graces, and should an antique beauty now revive, her face would certainly be put under the discipline of the tweezer, forehead-cloth and lead comb, before it could be seen in public company.

"But the difference between the ancients and moderns is not so great, as between the different countries of the present world. A lover of Gongora, for instance, sighs for thick lips, a Chinese lover is 20 poetical in praise of thin. In Circassia a streight nose is thought most consistent with beauty, cross but a mountain which seperates it from the Tartars, and there flat noses, tawny skins, and eyes three inches assunder, are all the fashion. In Persia and some other countries, a man when he marries, chuses to have his bride a maid, in the 25 Philippine Islands if a bridegroom happens to perceive on the first night that he is put off with a virgin, the marriage is declared void to all intents and purposes, and the bride sent back with disgrace.¹ In some parts of the East a woman of beauty properly fed up for sale, often amounts to one hundred crowns; in the kingdom of Loango 30 Ladies of the very best fashion are sold for a pig, Queens however

¹ produced] 62; procured *PL*

³ to have] 62; *om. PL*

²⁷ put] 62; fobbed *PL* declared] 62; (by Act of Parliament I suppose) declared null and *PL*

³⁰ one] 62; an *PL*

¹ See Buffon, *Histoire naturelle*, ii (1749), 501-2: 'Au royaume d'Arracan & aux isles Philippines, un homme se croiroit deshonoré s'il épousoit une fille qui n'eût pas été déflorée par un autre, & ce n'est qu'à prix d'argent que l'on peut engager quelqu'un à prévenir l'époux.'

sell better, and sometimes amount to a cow. In short turn even to England, don't I there see the beautiful part of the sex neglected; and none now marrying or making love but old men and old women that have saved money. Don't I see beauty from fifteen to twenty one
 5 rendered null and void to all intents and purposes, and those six precious years of womanhood put under a statute of virginity.¹ What! shall I call that rancid passion love, which passes between an old batchelor of fifty-six and a widow lady of forty-nine? Never! never! What advantage is society to reap from an intercourse, where the
 10 big belly is oftenest on the man's side. Would any persuade me that such a passion was natural, unless the human race were more fit for love as they approach'd their decline, and, like silk-worms, became breeders, just before they expired."

Whether love be natural or no, replied my friend, gravely, it
 15 contributes to the happiness of every society into which it is introduced. All our pleasures are short and can only charm at intervals, love is a method of protracting our greatest pleasure, and surely that gamester who plays the greatest stake to the best advantage, will at the end of life, rise victorious. This was the opinion of Vanini, who
 20 affirmed that *every hour was lost which was not spent in love*. His accusers were unable to comprehend his meaning, and the poor advocate for love was burned in flames alas, no way metaphorical.² But whatever advantages the individual may reap from this passion, society will certainly be refined and improved by its introduction:
 25 All laws calculated to discourage it, tend to embrate the species, and weaken the state. Tho' it cannot plant morals in the human breast, it cultivates them when there: pity, generosity, and honour receive a brighter polish from its assistance; and a single amour is sufficient entirely to brush off the clown.

¹ sometimes amount to] 62; are seldom bought under *PL*

8-9 forty-nine? Never! never! What] 62; forty-nine; what *PL*

12 their] *PL*; the 62

¹ Cf. Letters LXXII and CXIV.

² Cf. the account of Vanini in J. P. Bernard, Thomas Birch, John Lockman, *et al.*, *A General Dictionary, Historical and Critical* (1734-41), ix. 676, n. [I]: 'He concludes [his *Dialogues*] with declaring in the words of Tasso's *Amynta*, that all the time is lost, that is not spent in love:

*Perduto e tutto il tempo,
 Che in amar non si spende.'*

For Vanini's death see the paragraphs on him in 'On the Contradictions of the World. From Voltaire' in the *Bee* (above, I, p. 468).

But it is an exotic of the most delicate constitution, it requires the greatest art to introduce it into a state, and the smallest discouragement is sufficient to repress it again. Let us only consider with what ease it was formerly extinguished in Rome, and with what difficulty it was lately revived in Europe, it seemed to sleep for ages, and at last fought its way among us through tilts, tournaments, dragons, and all the dreams of chivalry. The rest of the world, China only excepted, are and have ever been utter strangers to its delights and advantages. In other countries, as men find themselves stronger than women, they lay a claim to a rigorous superiority; this is natural, and love which gives up this natural advantage must certainly be the effect of art. An art calculated to lengthen out our happier moments, and add new graces to society.

I entirely acquiesce in your sentiments, says the lady, with regard to the advantages of this passion, but cannot avoid giving it a nobler origin than you have been pleased to assign. I must think, that those countries where it is rejected, are obliged to have recourse to art to stifle so natural a production, and those nations where it is cultivated, only make nearer advances to nature. The same efforts that are used in some places to suppress pity and other natural passions, may have been employed to extinguish love. No nation however unpolished, is remarkable for innocence, that is not famous for this passion; it has flourished in the coldest, as well as the warmest regions. Even in the sultry wilds of southern America, the lover is not satisfied with possessing his mistress's person, without having her mind.

*In all my Enna's beauties blest
Amidst profusion still I pine;
For tho' she gives me up her breast
It's panting tenant is not mine*.*

But the effects of love are too violent to be the result of an artificial passion. Nor is it in the power of fashion to force the constitution into those changes which we every day observe. Several have died of it. Few lovers are unacquainted with the fate of the two Italian

* Translation of a South American Ode.

7 all the dreams of chivalry] 62; enchanted castles PL

10 a claim] 62; claim PL

22 this] PL; om. 62

30 the effects of love] 62; its effects PL

34 * Translation of . . . American Ode.] 62; om. PL

lovers Da Corsin and Julia Bellamano, who after a long separation expired with pleasure in each others arms. Such instances are too strong confirmations of the reality of the passion, and serve to shew that suppressing it, is but opposing the natural dictates of the heart.

5

Adieu.

LETTER CXVII.

[A city night-piece.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Peking, in China.

10 **T**HE clock just struck two, the expiring taper rises and sinks in the socket, the watchman forgets the hour in slumber, the laborious and the happy are at rest, and nothing wakes but meditation, guilt, revelry and despair. The drunkard once more fills the destroying bowl, the robber walks his midnight round, and the
15 suicide lifts his guilty arm against his own sacred person.

Let me no longer waste the night over the page of antiquity, or the sallies of cotemporary genius, but pursue the solitary walk, where vanity, ever changing, but a few hours past, walked before me, where she kept up the pageant, and now, like a froward child, seems hushed
20 with her own importunities.

What a gloom hangs all around! the dying lamp feebly emits a yellow gleam, no sound is heard but of the chiming clock, or the distant watch-dog. All the bustle of human pride is forgotten, an hour like this may well display the emptiness of human vanity.

There will come a time when this temporary solitude may be made continual, and the city itself, like its inhabitants, fade away, and leave a desert in its room.

What cities, as great as this, have once triumph'd in existence, had

4 heart.] 62; heart. "Upon the whole cries my friend, interrupting her, this topic is too metaphysical for conversation and rather more adapted to the closet than the tea table. The best way of treating a subject like this is to endeavour to get at the bottom of it, in private. PL

6 LETTER CXVII.] *This letter does not appear in PL. It was first printed in the 'Bee', No. IV, for 27 October 1759 (= 59), which is here used as copy-text.*

8-9 *From Lien . . . in China.]; To the same. 62; Ille dolet vere qui sine teste dolet. MART. 59*

10 just] 62; has 59

12 wakes] 62; now wakes 59

12-13 meditation.] 62; om. 59

23-24 an hour like this] 62; and this hour 59

25 will] 62; may 59

their victories as great, joy as just, and as unbounded, and with short-sighted presumption, promised themselves immortality. Posterity can hardly trace the situation of some. The sorrowful traveller wanders over the awful ruins of others, and as he beholds, he learns wisdom, and feels the transience of every sublunary possession. 5

Here, he cries, stood their citadel, now grown over with weeds; there their senate-house, but now the haunt of every noxious reptile; temples and theatres stood here, now only an undistinguished heap of ruin. They are fallen, for luxury and avarice first made them feeble. The rewards of state were conferred on amusing, and not on 10 useful members of society. Their riches and opulence invited the invaders, who, though at first repulsed, returned again, conquered by perseverance, and at last swept the defendants into undistinguished destruction.

How few appear in those streets, which but some few hours ago 15 were crowded; and those who appear, now no longer wear their daily mask, nor attempt to hide their lewdness or their misery.

But who are those who make the streets their couch, and find a short repose from wretchedness at the doors of the opulent? These are strangers, wanderers, and orphans, whose circumstances are too 20 humble to expect redress, and whose distresses are too great even for pity. Their wretchedness excites rather horror than pity. Some are without the covering even of rags, and others emaciated with disease; the world has disclaimed them; society turns its back upon their distress, and has given them up to nakedness and hunger. These 25 poor shivering females, have once seen happier days, and been flattered into beauty. They have been prostituted to the gay luxurious villain, and are now turned out to meet the severity of winter. Perhaps now lying at the doors of their betrayers they sue to wretches

1 victories as great] 62; victories as great as ours 59 unbounded] 62; unbounded as we 59

6 Here, he cries,] 62; Here 59 now] 62; but now 59

11 Their] 62; Thus true virtue languished, their 59

12 invaders] 62; plunderer 59 at first] 62; once 59

12-13 conquered by perseverance,] 62; *om.* 59

16 now no longer] 62; no longer now 59

21 whose distresses are] 62; their distresses 59

22 Their wretchedness . . . than pity.] 62; *om.* 59

24 has disclaimed] 62; seems to have disclaimed 59

28 winter] 62; winter in the streets 59

29 doors] 62; door 59

whose hearts are insensible, or debauchees who may curse, but will not relieve them.

Why, why was I born a man, and yet see the sufferings of wretches I cannot relieve! Poor houseless creatures! the world will give you reproaches, but will not give you relief. The slightest misfortunes of the great, the most imaginary uneasinesses of the rich, are aggravated with all the power of eloquence, and held up to engage our attention and sympathetic sorrow. The poor weep unheeded, persecuted by every subordinate species of tyranny, and every law, which gives others security, becomes an enemy to them.

Why was this heart of mine formed with so much sensibility! or why was not my fortune adapted to its impulse! Tenderness, without a capacity of relieving, only makes the man who feels it more wretched than the object which sues for assistance. Adieu.

LETTER CXVIII.¹

15

[On the meanness of the Dutch, at the court of Japan.]

Fum Hoam to Lien Chi Altangi, the discontented wanderer, by the way of Moscow.

I Have been just sent upon an embassy to Japan; my commission is to be dispatched in four days, and you can hardly conceive the pleasure I shall find upon revisiting my native country. I shall leave with joy this proud, barbarous, inhospitable region, where every object conspires to diminish my satisfactions, and encrease my patriotism.

But tho' I find the inhabitants savage, yet the Dutch merchants

1 insensible] 62; insensible to calamity 59

5-6 of the great] 62; om. 59

7 held up to] 62; om. 59

7-8 attention and . . . The poor] 62; attention; while you 59

9-10 every law . . . to them] 62; finding enmity in every law 59

13 man who] 62; heart that 59

14 assistance.] Following this 59 has an additional par., om. 62; see above, I, pp. 432-3. Adieu.] 62; om. 59

19 been just sent upon] 62; just returned from PL

20 is to be] 62; was PL

21 shall find] 62; found PL shall leave] 62; left PL

22 this] 62; that PL

22-23 object conspires] 62; thing conspired PL

24 find] 62; found PL

who are permitted to trade hither, seem still more detestable. They have raised my dislike to Europe in general; by them I learn how low avarice can degrade human nature; how many indignities an European will suffer for gain.

I was present at an audience given by the Emperor to the Dutch 5
envoy, who had sent several presents to all the courtiers some days
previous to his admission; but he was obliged to attend those de-
signed for the Emperor himself. From the accounts I had heard
of this ceremony, my curiosity prompted me to be a spectator of the
whole.¹

First went the presents, set out on beautiful enamelled tables,
adorned with flowers, borne on mens shoulders, and followed by
Japanese music and dancers. From so great respect paid to the gifts
themselves, I had fancied the donors must have received almost
divine honours. But about a quarter of an hour after the presents 15
had been carried in triumph, the envoy and his train were brought
forward. They were covered from head to foot with long black vails,
which prevented their seeing, each led by a conductor, chosen from
the meanest of the people. In this dishonourable manner having
traversed the city of Jedo, they at length arrived at the palace gate, 20
and after waiting half an hour, were admitted into the guard room.
Here their eyes were uncovered, and in about an hour the gentleman
usher introduced them into the hall of audience. The Emperor was
at length shewn sitting in a kind of Alcove at the upper end of the
room, and the Dutch envoy was conducted towards the throne. 25

As soon as he had approach'd within a certain distance, the
gentleman usher cried out with a loud voice, *Holanda Capitan*;
upon these words the envoy fell flat upon the ground, and crept
upon his hands and feet towards the throne. Still approaching,

1 are] 62; were *PL* hither, seem] 62; thither, seemed *PL*

7-8 he was . . . Emperor himself] 62; those designed for the Emperor he was
himself obliged to attend *PL*

10 whole] 62; whole, and here follows a description *PL*

15 about] 62; you shall hear. "About *PL*

16 brought] 62; next brought *PL*

18 each] 62; and each was *PL*

19 dishonourable] 62; honourable *PL*

23 into] 62; to *PL*

24 upper] 62; other *PL*

¹ The rest of this letter is a translation with considerable omissions and changes
from d'Argens's *Lettres chinoises*, lettre cxxv (v. 48-54, 56-57).

he rear'd himself upon his knees, and then bowed his forehead to the ground. These ceremonies being over, he was directed to withdraw, still groveling on his belly, and going backwards like a lobster.

- 5 Men must be excessively fond of riches, when they are earned with such circumstances of abject submission. Do the Europeans worship Heaven itself with marks of more profound respect? Do they confer those honours on the supreme of beings, which they pay to a barbarous king, who gives them a permission to purchase
10 trinkets and porcelain! What a glorious exchange, to forfeit their national honour, and even their title to humanity, for a screen or a snuff-box!

If these ceremonies essayed in the first audience appeared mortifying, those which are practised in the second are infinitely more
15 so. In the second audience, the Emperor and the ladies of court were placed behind lattices in such a manner as to see without being seen. Here all the Europeans were directed to pass in review, and grovel and act the serpent as before; with this spectacle the whole court seemed highly delighted. The strangers were asked
20 a thousand ridiculous questions; as their names, and their ages: They were ordered to write, to stand upright, to sit, to stop, to compliment each other, to be drunk, to speak the Japanese language, to talk Dutch, to sing, to eat; in short, they were ordered to do all that could satisfy the curiosity of women.

- 25 Imagine, my dear Altangi, a set of grave men thus transformed into buffoons, and acting a part every whit as honourable as that of those instructed animals which are shewn in the streets of Pekin to the mob on a holiday. Yet the ceremony did not end here, for every great Lord of the court was to be visited in the same manner;
30 and their ladies, who took the whim from their husbands, were all equally fond of seeing the strangers perform, even the children seeming highly diverted with the dancing Dutchmen.

7 respect] 62; humiliation *PL*

13 these] 62; the *PL*

14 are practised] 62; were practised *PL*

second are] 62; second were *PL*

16 placed] 62; all placed *PL*

20 as] 62; *om. PL*

and their ages:] 62; their ages, were demanded. *PL*

21 sit] 62; sit, to walk *PL*

22 other] 62; other, to dance *PL*

25 thus] 62; *om. PL*

30 husbands] 62; betters *PL*

Alas, cried I, to myself, upon returning from such a spectacle, is this the nation which assumes such dignity at the court of Pekin? Is this that people who appear so proud at home, and in every country where they have the least authority? How does a love of gain transform the gravest of mankind into the most contemptible and ridiculous? I had rather continue poor all my life, than become rich at such a rate. Perish those riches which are acquired at the expence of my honour or my humanity. Let me quit, said I, a country where there are none but such as treat all others like slaves, and more detestable still, in suffering such treatment. I have seen enough of this nation to desire to see more of others. Let me leave a people suspicious to excess, whose morals are corrupted, and equally debased by superstition and vice, where the sciences are left uncultivated, where the Great are slaves to the Prince and tyrants to the people, where the women are chaste only when debarred of the power of transgression, where the true disciples of Confucius are not less persecuted than those of Christianity; in a word, a country where men are forbidden to think, and consequently labour under the most miserable slavery, that of mental servitude. Adieu.

1 from such a spectacle] 62; home *PL*

3 who] *PL*; that 62

10 more] 62; wretches more *PL* suffering such treatment] 62; being willing to be treated so *PL*

11 this nation] 62; other nations *PL* of others] 62; *om. PL*

12-13 corrupted, and equally] 62; greatly corrupted, who are as much *PL*

13 and vice] 62; as by vice *PL*

14-15 tyrants to] 62; tyrants over *PL*

18 think] 62; think with freedom *PL*

19 slavery, that of mental] 62; *om. PL*

LETTER CXIX.

[On the distresses of the poor, exemplified in the life of a private centinel.]

*From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Cere-
monial Academy at Pekin, in China.*

5 **T**HE misfortunes of the great, my friend, are held up to engage
our attention, are enlarged upon in tones of declamation, and
the world is called upon to gaze at the noble sufferers; they have
at once the comfort of admiration and pity.

Yet where is the magnanimity of bearing misfortunes when the
10 whole world is looking on? Men in such circumstances can act
bravely even from motives of vanity.¹ He only who, in the vale of
obscurity, can brave adversity, who without friends to encourage,
acquaintances to pity, or even without hope to alleviate his distresses,
can behave with tranquillity and indifference, is truly great: whether
15 peasant or courtier he deserves admiration, and should be held up
for our imitation and respect.

The miseries of the poor are however entirely disregarded; tho'
some undergo more real hardships in one day than the great in

1 **LETTER CXIX.**] *This letter did not appear in PL; it was first printed in the 'British Magazine' for June 1760 (= BM), here used as copy-text.*

1-4 **LETTER CXIX . . . in China.**] *To the Authors of the BRITISH MAGAZINE. GENTLEMEN, BM; ESSAY XXIV. 65, 66*

2 *On the . . . private centinel.*] 62; *The distresses of a common soldier. BM, running-title*

3-4 *From Lien . . . in China.*] *To the same. 62*

5 **THE**] 62; No observation is more common, and at the same time more true, than
"That one half of the world are ignorant how the other half lives." *The BM, 65, 66*
great, my friend,] 62; great *BM, 65, 66*

7 **they**] 62; the great, under the pressure of calamity, are conscious of several others
sympathizing with their distress, and *BM, 65, 66*

9 Yet where . . . bearing misfortunes] 62; There is nothing magnanimous in bearing
misfortunes with fortitude, *BM, 65, 66*

10 on? Men] 62; on: men *BM 65, 66* can] 62; will *BM, 65, 66*

11 vanity. He only] 62; vanity, but he *BM, 65, 66*

13 distresses] 62; misfortunes *BM, 65, 66*

17 **The**] 62; While the slightest inconveniencies of the great are magnified into cala-
mities; while tragedy mouths out their sufferings in all the strains of eloquence, the
BM, 65, 66 however] 62; *om. BM, 65, 66*

17-18 tho' some] 62; and yet some of the lower ranks of people *BM, 65, 66*

18 the great] 62; those of a more exalted station suffer *BM, 65, 66*

¹ Cf. Letter LXVII.

their whole lives. It is indeed inconceivable what difficulties the meanest English sailor or soldier endures without murmuring or regret. Every day is to him a day of misery, and yet he bears his hard fate without repining.

With what indignation do I hear the heroes of tragedy complain 5 of misfortunes and hardships, whose greatest calamity is founded in arrogance and pride. Their distresses are pleasures, compared to what many of the adventuring poor every day sustain, without murmuring. These may eat, drink, and sleep, have slaves to attend them, and are sure of subsistence for life, while many of their 10 fellow-creatures are obliged to wander, without a friend to comfort or to assist them, find enmity in every law, and are too poor to obtain even justice.

I have been led into these reflections from accidentally meeting some days ago a poor fellow begging at one of the outlets of this 15 town, with a wooden leg. I was curious to learn what had reduced him to his present situation; and after giving him what I thought proper, desired to know the history of his life and misfortunes, and the manner in which he was reduced to his present distress. The disabled soldier, for such he was, with an intrepidity truly British, 20

1 indeed] 62; *om. BM, 65, 66*

2 English sailor or soldier endures] 62; of our common sailors and soldiers endure *BM, 65, 66*

3 regret] 62; regret, without passionately declaiming against Providence, or calling their fellows to be gazers on their intrepidity *BM, 65, 66* him] 62; them *BM, 65, 66* he bears his] 62; they entertain their *BM, 65, 66*

5 the heroes of tragedy] 62; an Ovid, a Cicero, or a Rabutin, *BM, 65, 66*

6 misfortunes] 62; their misfortunes *BM, 65, 66*

6-7 is founded . . . and pride] 62; was that of being unable to visit a certain spot of earth, to which they had foolishly attached an idea of happiness *BM, 65, 66*

7 distresses] 65, 66; severest distresses *BM, 62* are] 62; were *BM, 65, 66*

8 sustain] 62; endure *BM, 65, 66*

9 These may . . . sleep, have] 62; They ate, drank, and slept, they had *BM, 65, 66*

10 are sure] 62; were sure *BM, 65, 66*

12 to assist] 62; assist *BM, 65, 66*

12-13 find enmity . . . even justice] 62; even [and even 65, 66] without a [*om. 66*] shelter from the severity of the season *BM, 65, 66*

15 fellow] 62; fellow, whom I knew when a boy, dressed in a sailor's jacket, and *BM, 65, 66* this] 62; the *BM, 65, 66*

16 I] 62; I knew him to be [to have been 66] honest and industrious when in the country, and *BM, 65, 66*

17 situation; and] 62; situation. Wherefore, *BM, 65, 66*

18 desired] 62; I desired *BM, 65, 66*

20 with an intrepidity truly British.] 62; though dressed in a sailor's habit, scratching his head, and *BM, 65, 66*

leaning on his crutch, put himself into an attitude to comply with my request, and gave me his history as follows:¹

“As for my misfortunes, Sir, I can’t pretend to have gone through more than others. Except the loss of my limb, and my being obliged
5 to beg, I don’t know any reason, thank heaven, that I have to complain; there are some who have lost both legs, and an eye; but, thank heaven, it is not quite so bad with me.

“My father was a labourer in the country, and died when I was five years old; so I was put upon the parish. As he had been a
10 wandering sort of a man, the parishioners were not able to tell to what parish I belonged, or where I was born; so they sent me to another parish, and that parish sent me to a third; till at last it was thought I belonged to no parish at all. At length, however, they fixed me. I had some disposition to be a scholar, and had actually
15 learned my letters; but the master of the workhouse put me to business as soon as I was able to handle a mallet.

“Here I lived an easy kind of a life for five years. I only wrought ten hours in the day, and had my meat and drink provided for my labour. It is true, I was not suffered to stir far from the house, for
20 fear I should run away: but what of that, I had the liberty of the whole house, and the yard before the door, and that was enough for me.

2 follows:] *BM*-65; follows. 66

3 my] 65, 66; *om. BM*, 62 Sir] 62; master *BM*, 65, 66

4 more than others. Except] 62; any more than other folks, for except *BM*, 65, 66
6 are some . . . an eye] 62; is Bill Tibbs of our regiment, he has lost both his legs, and an eye to boot *BM*, 65, 66

7 quite] 62; *om. BM*, 65, 66 me] 62; me yet *BM*, 65, 66

8 My] 62; I was born in Shropshire, my *BM*, 65, 66 in the country] 62; *om. BM*, 65, 66

12-13 third; till . . . At length] 62; third. I thought in my heart, they kept sending me about so long, that they would not let me be born in any parish at all; but at last *BM*, 65, 66

14-15 had actually learned] 62; was resolved at least to know *BM*, 65, 66

16-17 mallet. “Here] 62; mallet; and here *BM*, 65, 66

19 far from] 62; out of *BM*, 65, 66

20 fear] 62; fear, as they said, *BM*, 65, 66

¹ With this paragraph cf. Lyttelton’s *Letters from a Persian in England to his Friend at Ispahan*, letter xxiv (5th ed., 1744), p. 85: ‘As I was walking in the Fields near this City [London] the other Morning, a disbanded Soldier somewhat in Years implored my Charity, and, to excite my Compassion, bared his Bosom, on which were the Scars of many Wounds, all received in the Service of his Country. I gladly relieved his Wants, and being desirous to inform myself of every thing, fell into Discourse with him on the War in which he had served.’

"I was next bound out to a farmer, where I was up both early and late, but I ate and drank well, and liked my business well enough, till he died. Being then obliged to provide for myself, I was resolved to go seek my fortune. Thus I lived, and went from town to town, working when I could get employment, and starving when I could get none, and might have lived so still: But happening one day to go through a field belonging to a magistrate, I spy'd a hare crossing the path just before me. I believe the devil put it in my head to fling my stick at it: well, what will you have on't? I killed the hare, and was bringing it away, when the justice himself met me: he called me a villain, and collaring me, desired I would give an account of myself. I began immediately to give a full account of all that I knew of my breed, seed, and generation; but though I gave a very true account, the justice said, I could give no account; so I was indicted, and found guilty of being poor, and sent to Newgate, in order to be transported to the plantations.

"People may say this and that of being in jail; but for my part, I found Newgate as agreeable a place as ever I was in in all my life. I had my belly full to eat and drink, and did no work; but alas, this kind of life was too good to last for ever! I was taken out of prison, after five months, put on board of a ship, and sent off with two hundred more. Our passage was but indifferent, for we were all

- 1 "I was next] 62; I was then *BM*, 65, 66, *with no par.*
 3 died. Being then] 62; died, when I was *BM*, 65, 66 myself, I] 62; myself;
 so I *BM*, 65, 66
 4 seek] 66; and seek *BM*-65 Thus I lived, and] 62; In this manner I *BM*,
 65, 66, *beginning a par.* 65, 66
 5 working] 62; worked *BM*, 65, 66 starving] 62; starved *BM*, 65, 66
 6 none, and . . . still: But] 62; none: when *BM*, 65, 66
 7 magistrate] 62; justice of peace *BM*, 65, 66
 8 me.] 62; me; and *BM*, 65, 66
 10 away] 66; away in triumph *BM*-65
 11 villain] 62; poacher and a villain *BM*, 65, 66
 12 myself. I began immediately] 62; myself; I fell upon my knees, begged his
 worship's pardon, and began *BM*, 65, 66
 14 true] 66; good *BM*, 65; long 62 said, I . . . no account] 62, 66; would not
 believe a syllable I had to say *BM*, 65 no account] 66; no account of myself 62
 15 indicted, and] 62; indicted at sessions, *BM*, 65, 66 sent] 62; sent up to
 London *BM*, 65, 66
 16 to the plantations] 62; as a vagabond *BM*, 65, 66
 17 "People] 62-66; People *BM*, *with no par.*
 19 work; but alas, this] 62; work at all. This *BM*, 65, 66
 20 ever!] 62; ever; so *BM*, 65, 66
 21 board of] 62; board *BM*, 65, 66
 22-4 (p. 462) more. Our . . . of eating.] 62; more to the plantations. We had but an

confined in the hold, and died very fast, for want of sweet air and provisions; but for my part, I did not want meat, because I had a fever all the way: providence was kind, when provisions grew short, it took away my desire of eating. When we came a-shore we
 5 were sold to the planters. I was bound for seven years, and as I was no scholar, for I had forgot my letters, I was obliged to work among the negroes; and served out my time, as in duty bound to do.

"When my time was expired, I worked my passage home, and glad I was to see Old England again, because I loved my country.
 10 O liberty, liberty, liberty! that is the property of every Englishman, and I will die in its defence: I was afraid, however, that I should be indicted for a vagabond once more, so did not much care to go into the country, but kept about town, and did little jobbs when I could get them. I was very happy in this manner for some time,
 15 till one evening, coming home from work, two men knocked me down, and then desired me to stand still. They belonged to a press-gang; I was carried before the justice, and as I could give no account of myself, (that was the thing that always hobbled me,) I had my choice left, whether to go on board a man of war, or list for a soldier. I
 20 chose to be a soldier; and in this post of a gentleman I served two campaigns, was at the battles in Flanders, and received but one wound, through the breast, which is troublesome to this day.

"When the peace came on, I was discharged; and as I could not work, because my wound was sometimes painful, I listed for a

indifferent passage, for being all confined in the hold, more than a hundred of our people died for want of sweet air, and those that remained were sickly enough, God knows. *BM*, 65, 66

5 planters.] 62; planters, and *BM*, 65, 66 years, and as] 62; years more. As *BM*, 65, 66

6 had forgot] 62; did not know *BM*, 65, 66

7 served] 62; I served *BM*, 65, 66

10-11 O liberty . . . its defence:] 62; *om. BM*, 65, 66

12 go] 62; go down *BM*, 65, 66

13 town] 62; the town *BM*, 65, 66

14 I was] *BM*, 62; "I was 65, 66, with *par.*

16 still] 62; *om. BM*, 65, 66

18 (that was . . . hobbled me,)] 62; *om. BM*, 65, 66

20 to be a soldier] 62; the latter *BM*, 65, 66

21 campaigns] 62; campaigns in Flanders *BM*, 65, 66 in Flanders] 62; of Val and Fontenoy *BM*, 65, 66

22 breast, which . . . this day] 62; breast here; but the doctor of our regiment soon made me well again *BM*, 65, 66

23 "When] 62-66; When *BM*, with no *par.*

24 painful] 62; troublesome *BM*, 65, 66

landman in the East India company's service. I here fought the French in six pitched battles; and verily believe, that if I could read or write, our captain would have given me promotion, and made me a corporal. But that was not my good fortune, I soon fell sick, and when I became good for nothing, got leave to return home again with forty pounds in my pocket, which I saved in the service. This was at the beginning of the present war, so I hoped to be set on shore and to have the pleasure of spending my money; but the government wanted men, and I was pressed again, before ever I could set foot on shore.

"The boatswain found me, as he said, an obstinate fellow: he swore that I understood my business perfectly well, but that I pretended sickness to be idle; God knows, I knew nothing of sea-business: he beat me without considering what he was about. But still my forty pounds was some comfort to me under every beating; the money was my comfort, and the money I might have had to this day; but that our ship was taken by the French, and so I lost it all.

"Our crew was carried into a French prison, and many of them died, because they were not used to live in a jail; but for my part it was nothing to me, for I was seasoned. One night however, as I was sleeping on the bed of boards, with a warm blanket about me, for I always loved to lie well, I was awakened by the boatswain, who had a dark lanthorn in his hand. 'Jack, says he to me, will you

2 verily] 62; I verily *BM*, 65, 66

3 given me promotion, and] 62; *om. BM*, 65, 66

4 that] 62; it *BM*, 65, 66 fortune,] 62; fortune to have any promotion, for *BM*, 65, 66

5 when I . . . for nothing,] 62, so *BM*, 65, 66

6 pocket, which . . . the service] 62; pocket *BM*, 65, 66

7 so] 62; and *BM*, 65, 66

9 and I] 62; and so I *BM*, 65, 66 again] 62; for a sailor *BM*, 65, 66

12 swore] 62; swore he knew *BM*, 65, 66 perfectly] 62; *om. BM*, 65, 66

13 pretended sickness] 62; sham'd [shammed 65, 66] Abraham, *BM*, 65, 66 to be] 66; merely to be *BM*-65 God] 62; but God *BM*, 65, 66

13-14 sea-business:] 62; sea-business, and *BM*, 65, 66

14-15 But still my forty pounds] 62; I had still, however, my forty pounds, and that *BM*, 65, 66

16 the money was my comfort,] 62; *om. BM*, 65, 66

18 it] 62; *om. BM*, 65, 66

19 a French prison] 62; Brest *BM*, 65, 66

21 however] 62; *om. BM*, 65, 66

23 awakened] *BM*, 65, 66; awaked 62

24 hand.] *BM*, 62; hand; 65, 66

knock out the French centry's brains?' 'I don't care, says I, striving to keep myself awake, if I lend a hand.' 'Then follow me, says he, and I hope we shall do business.' So up I got and tied my blanket, which was all the cloaths I had, about my middle, and went with
 5 him to fight the Frenchmen. I hate the French because they are all slaves, and wear wooden Shoes. We had no arms; but one Englishman is able to beat five French at any time; so we went down to the door, where both the centries were posted, and rushing upon them, seized their arms in a moment, and knocked them down. From
 10 thence, nine of us ran together to the key, and seizing the first boat we met, got out of the harbour, and put to sea. We had not been here three days before we were taken up by an English privateer, who was glad of so many good hands; and we consented to run our chance. However, we had not so much luck as we expected. In three
 15 days we fell in with a French man of war, of forty guns, while we had but twenty-three; so to it we went. The fight lasted for three hours, and I verily believe we should have taken the Frenchman; but, unfortunately, we lost all our men just as we were going to get the victory. I was once more in the power of the French, and I
 20 believe it would have gone hard with me had I been brought back to my old jail in Brest: but by good fortune we were re-taken, and carried to England once more.

"I had almost forgot to tell you, that in this last engagement I was wounded in two places; I lost four fingers of the left hand, and my
 25 leg was shot off. Had I the good fortune to have lost my leg and

3 business.' So] 62-66; business: so *BM*

5-6 Frenchmen. I . . . wooden Shoes.] 65, 66; Frenchmen: *BM*, 62

6 We] though we *BM*; we 62; "Though we 65, 66, *with par.* arms; but] 62; arms *BM*, 65, 66

11 sea. We] 65, 66; sea: we *BM*, 62

12 an English] 62; the Dorset *BM*, 65, 66

13 was] 62; were *BM*, 65, 66

14 so] 62; as *BM*, 65, 66

15 a French man of war] 62; the Pompadour privateer *BM*, 65, 66

16 went. The] 62; went, yard arm and yard arm: the [arm. The 65, 66] *BM*, 65, 66

17 Frenchman] 62; Frenchman, had we had [we but had 65, 66] some more men left behind *BM*, 65, 66

18 all] 65, 66; almost all *BM*, 62

19 I was] *BM*, 62; "I was 65, 66, *with par.*

21 my old jail in] 62; *om. BM*, 65, 66

Brest: but] 62-66; Brest. But *BM*

21-22 re-taken, and . . . once more] 62; re-taken by the Viper *BM*, 65, 66

23 "I] 62; I *BM*, 65, 66, *with no par.*

this last] 62; that *BM*, 65, 66

25 Had I] 62; If I had had *BM*, 65, 66

use of my hand on board a king's ship, and not a privateer, I should have been entitled to cloathing and maintenance during the rest of my life, but that was not my chance; one man is born with a silver spoon in his mouth, and another with a wooden ladle. However, blessed be God, I enjoy good health, and will for ever love liberty and Old England. Liberty, property, and Old England, for ever, huzza!"

Thus saying, he limped off, leaving my friend and me in admiration at his intrepidity and content; nor could we avoid acknowledging, that an habitual acquaintance with misery is the truest school of fortitude and philosophy. Adieu.

LETTER CXX.¹

[On the absurdity of some late English titles.]

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

15

THE titles of European Princes are rather more numerous than those of Asia, but by no means so sublime. The King of Visapour or Pegu, not satisfied with claiming the globe and all its appurtenances to him and his heirs, asserts a property even in the firmament,² and extends his orders to the milky way. The monarchs of Europe with more modesty, confine their titles to earth, but make

¹ not a] 62; not a-board a BM, 65, 66

⁵⁻⁷ will for . . . ever, huzza!] 65, 66; will now go and drink to that of your honour. BM; have no enemy in this world that I know of, but the French, and the Justice of Peace. 62

⁸ my friend and] 62; om. BM, 65, 66

⁹ at] 65, 66; of BM, 62 we] 62; I BM, 65, 66

¹⁰⁻¹¹ is the . . . philosophy. Adieu.] 62; serves better than philosophy to teach us to despise it. BM, 65, 66

¹ In the *Public Ledger* for Wednesday, 8 July 1761.

² Concerning the King of Pegu, Emanuel Bowen says: ' . . . in his Letters to foreign Princes he assumes the Title of "King of Kings, to whom all other Kings ought to be subject, as being near Kinsman and Friend to all the Gods in Heaven and on Earth; by whose Friendship to him all Animals are fed and preserv'd, and the Seasons of the Year regularly kept; Lord over the Floods and Ebbs of the Sea:" And after all his lofty Epithets and Hyperboles, he descends to be King of the white Elephant, and of the 24 white Sommereroes, which are Umbrellas . . .' (*A Complete System of Geography* [1747], ii. 296). Concerning the King of Visiapour, Bowen says merely that 'now he is a Vassal to the Great Mogul' (ii. 337).

up by number, what is wanting in their sublimity. Such is their passion for a long list of these splendid trifles, that I have known a German Prince with more titles than subjects, and a Spanish nobleman with more names than shirts.

- 5 Contrary to this, "The English monarchs, says a writer of the last century, disdain to accept of such titles, which tend only to encrease their pride, without improving their glory, they are above depending on the feeble helps of heraldry for respect, perfectly satisfied with the consciousness of acknowledged power." At present
10 however these maxims are laid aside, the English monarchs have of late assumed new titles, and have impressed their coins with the names and arms of obscure dukedoms, petty states, and subordinate employments.¹ Their design in this I make no doubt, was laudably to add new lustre to the British throne, but in reality paltry claims
15 only serve to diminish that respect they are designed to secure.

- There is in the honours assumed by Kings, as in the decorations of architecture, a majestic simplicity, which best conduces to inspire our reverence and respect; numerous and trifling ornaments in either, are strong indications of meanness in the designer, or of concealed deformity: should, for instance, the Emperor of China,
20 among other titles, assume that of Deputy Mandarin of Maccaw, or the Monarch of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, desire to be acknowledged as Duke of Brentford, Lunenburgh, or Lincoln, the observer revolts at this mixture of important and paltry claims, and
25 forgets the Emperor in his familiarity with the Duke or the Deputy.

- I remember a similar instance of this inverted ambition, in the illustrious King of Manacabo, upon his first treaty with the Portuguese. Among the presents that were made him, by the ambassador of that nation, was a sword, with a brass hilt, which he seemed
30 to set a peculiar value upon. This he thought too great an acquisition to his glory, to be forgotten among the number of his titles. He

1 number] 62; their number *PL*

6 such titles,] 62; titles *PL*

25 the Duke or] 62; *om. PL*

28 that were] 62; which were *PL*

¹ The guineas struck in 1761 continued the practice of the reigns of George I and George II by having on the reverse the inscription 'M.B.F.ET H.REX F.D.B.ET L.D.S.R.I.A.T.ET E.', which expands into 'Magnae Britanniae, Franciae, et Hiberniae Rex, Fidei Defensor, Brunsviciensis et Luneburgensis Dux, Sacri Romani Imperii Archi-Thesaurarius et Elector'. See Charles Oman, *The Coinage of England* (Oxford, 1931), pp. 348, 351, 355.

therefore gave orders, that his subjects should style him for the future, *Talipot, the immortal Potentate of Manacabo, Messenger of Morning, Enlightener of the Sun, Possessor of the whole Earth, and mighty Monarch of the Brass-handled Sword.*

This method of mixing majestic and paltry titles, of quartering 5 the arms of a great Empire, and an obscure province upon the same medal here, had its rise in the virtuous partiality of their late Monarchs. Willing to testify an affection to their native country, they gave its name and ensigns a place upon their coins, and thus in some measure ennobled its obscurity. It was indeed but just 10 that a people which had given England up their King, should receive some honorary equivalent in return; but at present these motives are no more; England has now a Monarch wholly British, and it has some reason to hope for British titles upon British coins. 15

However, were the money of England designed to circulate in Germany, there would be no flagrant impropriety in impressing it with German names and arms; but though this might have been so upon former occasions, I am told there is no danger of it for the future; as England therefore designs to keep back its gold, I candidly 20 think Lunenburgh, Oldenburgh, and the rest of them may very well keep back their titles.

It is a mistaken prejudice in Princes, to think that a number of loud sounding names can give new claims to respect. The truly great have ever disdained them: When Timur the Lame had con- 25 quered Asia, an orator by profession came to compliment him upon the occasion. He began his harrangue, by styling him the most omnipotent, and the most glorious object of the creation; the Emperor seemed displeased with his paltry adulation, yet still he went on, complimenting him, as the most mighty, the most valiant, and the most perfect of beings: Hold there, my friend, cries the lame Emperor; hold there, till I have got another leg. In fact, the feeble or the despotic alone find pleasure in multiplying these pageants of vanity, but strength and freedom have nobler aims, and often find the finest adulation in majestic simplicity. 30

The young Monarch of this country has already testified a proper contempt for several unmeaning appendages on royalty; cooks and

24 respect. The] 62; respect; the PL

31 and] 62; om. PL of beings] 62; om. PL

32 lame] 62; good PL

scullions have been obliged to quit their fires; gentlemens gentlemen, and the whole tribe of *necessary people*, who did nothing, have been dismissed from further services. A youth who can thus bring back simplicity and frugality to a court, will soon probably have a true
 5 respect for his own glory, and while he has dismissed all useless employments, may disdain to accept of empty or degrading titles.
 Adieu.

LETTER CXXI.

[The irresolution of the English accounted for.]

10 *From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Cere-
 monial Academy at Pekin, in China.*

WHENEVER I attempt to characterize the English in
 general; some unforeseen difficulties constantly occur to
 disconcert my design; I hesitate between censure and praise: when
 15 I consider them as a reasoning philosophical people, they have my
 applause; but when I reverse the medal, and observe their incon-
 stancy and irresolution, I can scarcely persuade my self that I am
 observing the same people.

Yet upon examination, this very inconstancy, so remarkable here,
 20 flows from no other source than their love of reasoning.¹ The man
 who examines a complicated subject on every side, and calls in
 reason to his assistance, will frequently change; will find himself
 distracted by opposing probabilities and contending proofs: every
 alteration of place will diversify the prospect, will give some latent
 25 argument new force, and contribute to maintain an anarchy in the
 mind.

On the contrary, they who never examine with their own reason,
 act with more simplicity. Ignorance is positive, instinct perseveres,
 and the human being moves in safety within the narrow circle of

1 quit] 62; forsake PL

2 did] 62; do PL

6 titles] 62; appellations PL

8 LETTER CXXI.] *This entire letter om. PL. No publication is known prior to 62.*

10-11 *From Lien . . . in China.] From the same. 62*

¹ Cf. Goldsmith's characterization of the English in 'A Comparative View of Races and Nations': 'They are distinguished from the rest of Europe by their superior accuracy in reasoning, and are in general called the nation of philosophers by their neighbours of the continent . . .' (below, III, p. 85).

brutal uniformity. What is true with regard to individuals, is not less so when applied to states. A reasoning government like this, is in continual fluctuation, while those kingdoms where men are taught not to controvert but obey, continue always the same. In Asia, for instance, where the monarch's authority is supported by force, and acknowledged through fear, a change of government is entirely unknown. All the inhabitants seem to wear the same mental complexion, and remain contented with hereditary oppression. The sovereign's pleasure is the ultimate rule of duty, every branch of the administration is a perfect epitome of the whole; and if one tyrant is deposed, another starts up in his room to govern as his predecessor. The English, on the contrary, instead of being led by power, endeavour to guide themselves by reason; instead of appealing to the pleasure of the prince, appeal to the original rights of mankind. What one rank of men assert is denied by others, as the reasons on opposite sides happen to come home with greater or less conviction. The people of Asia are directed by precedent, which never alters; the English by reason, which is ever changing its appearance.

The disadvantages of an Asiatic government acting in this manner by precedent are evident; original errors are thus continued, without hopes of redress, and all marks of genius are levelled down to one standard, since no superiority of thinking can be allowed its exertion in mending obvious defects. But to recompence those defects, their governments undergo no new alterations, they have no new evils to fear, nor no fermentations in the constitution that continue: the struggle for power is soon over, and all becomes tranquil as before; they are habituated to subordination, and men are taught to form no other desires, than those which they are allowed to satisfy.

The disadvantages of a government acting from the immediate influence of reason, like that of England, are not less than those of the former. It is extremely difficult to induce a number of free beings to co-operate for their mutual benefit; every possible advantage will necessarily be sought, and every attempt to procure it must be attended with a new fermentation; various reasons will lead different ways, and equity and advantage will often be out-ballanced by a combination of clamour and prejudice. But though such a people may be thus in the wrong, they have been influenced by an happy delusion, their errors are seldom seen till they are felt; each man is himself the tyrant he has obeyed, and such a master

he can easily forgive. The disadvantages he feels may in reality be equal to what is felt in the most despotic government; but man will bear every calamity with patience, when he knows himself to be the author of his own misfortunes. Adieu.

5

LETTER CXXII.

[The manner of travellers in their usual relations, ridiculed.]

*From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Cere-
monial Academy at Peking, in China.*

10 MY long residence here begins to fatigue me, as every object ceases to be new, it no longer continues to be pleasing; some minds are so fond of variety that pleasure it self, if permanent, would be insupportable, and we are thus obliged to solicit new happiness even by courting distress: I only therefore wait the arrival of my son to vary this trifling scene, and borrow new pleasure from
15 danger and fatigue. A life, I own, thus spent in wandring from place to place, is at best but empty dissipation. But to pursue trifles is the lot of humanity; and whether we bustle in a pantomime, or strut at a coronation; whether we shout at a bonfire, or harrangue in a senate-house; whatever object we follow, it will at last surely conduct
20 us to futility and disappointment. The wise bustle and laugh as they walk in the pageant, but fools bustle and are important; and this probably is all the difference between them.

This may be an apology for the levity of my former correspondence; I talked of trifles, and I knew that they were trifles; to make
25 the things of this life ridiculous, it was only sufficient to call them by their names.

In other respects, I have omitted several striking circumstances in the description of this country, as supposing them either already known to you, or as not being thoroughly known to myself: But
30 there is one omission for which I expect no forgiveness, namely, my being totally silent upon their buildings, roads, rivers, and mountains. This is a branch of science on which all other travellers are so very prolix, that my deficiency will appear the more glaring.¹

5 LETTER CXXII.] *This entire letter om. PL. No publication is known prior to 62.
7-8 From Lien . . . in China.] From the same. 62*

¹ Johnson has a similar criticism of the accounts of travellers in the *Idler*, No. 97 (23 February 1760).

With what pleasure, for instance, do some read of a traveller in Egypt, measuring a fallen column with his cane, and finding it exactly five feet nine inches long; of his creeping through the mouth of a catacomb, and coming out by a different hole from that he entered; of his stealing the finger of an antique statue, in spite of the janizary that watch'd him; or his adding a new conjecture to the hundred and fourteen conjectures already published, upon the names of *Osiris* and *Isis*.

Methinks I hear some of my friends in China demanding a similar account of London and the adjacent villages; and if I remain here much longer, it is probable I may gratify their curiosity. I intend, when run dry on other topics, to take a serious survey of the City-wall; to describe that beautiful building the Mansion-House; I will enumerate the magnificent squares, in which the nobility chiefly reside, and the Royal Palaces appointed for the reception of the English Monarch; nor will I forget the beauties of Shoe-Lane, in which I my self have resided since my arrival. You shall find me no way inferior to many of my brother travellers in the arts of description. At present, however as a specimen of this way of writing, I send you a few hasty remarks, collected in a late journey I made to Kentish Town, *and this in the manner of modern voyagers*.

'Having heard much of Kentish Town, I conceived a strong desire to see that celebrated place. I could have wish'd indeed to satisfy my curiosity without going thither; but that was impracticable, and therefore I resolved to go. Travellers have two methods of going to Kentish Town; they take coach which costs nine pence, or they may go a foot which costs nothing; in my opinion, a coach is by far the most eligible convenience, but I was resolved to go on foot, having considered with my self, that going in that manner would be the cheapest way.

'As you set out from Dog-house bar, you enter upon a fine level road rail'd in on both sides, commanding on the right a fine prospect of groves, and fields, enamell'd with flowers, which would wonderfully charm the sense of smelling, were it not for a dunghill on the left, which mixes its effluvia with their odours: This dunghill is of much greater antiquity than the road; and I must not omit a piece of injustice I was going to commit upon this occasion. My indignation was levelled against the makers of the dunghill for having brought it so near the road; whereas it should have fallen upon the makers of the road for having brought that so near the dunghill.

'After proceeding in this manner for some time, a building resembling somewhat a triumphal arch salutes the traveller's view. This structure however is peculiar to this country, and vulgarly call'd a turnpike gate: I could perceive a long inscription in large
 5 characters on the front, probably upon the occasion of some triumph, but being in haste I left it to be made out by some subsequent adventurer who may happen to travel this way; so continuing my course to the west, I soon arrived at an unwall'd town called Islington.

10 'Islington is a pretty neat town, mostly built of brick, with a church and bells: It has a small lake, or rather pond in the midst; tho' at present very much neglected. I am told it is dry in summer; if this be the case, it can be no very proper receptacle for fish, of which the inhabitants themselves seem sensible, by bringing all that
 15 is eaten there from London.

'After having surveyed the curiosities of this fair and beautiful town I proceeded forward, leaving a fair stone building called the White Conduit House on my right: here the inhabitants of London often assemble to celebrate a feast of hot rolls and butter; seeing
 20 such numbers, each with their little tables before them, employed on this occasion, must no doubt be a very amusing sight to the looker on, but still more so to those who perform in the solemnity.

'From hence I parted with reluctance to *Pancrass*, as it is written, or *Pancridge* as it is pronounced; but which should be both pro-
 25 nounced and written *Pangrace*: This emendation I will venture meo arbitrio: *Παυ* in the Greek language signifies all, which added to the English word *grace*, maketh *all grace*, or *Pangrace*; and indeed this is a very proper appellation to a place of so much sanctity as Pangrace is universally esteemed. However this be, if you except the
 30 parish church and its fine bells, there is little in Pangrace worth the attention of the curious observer.

'From Pangrace to Kentish town is an easy journey of one mile and a quarter: The road lies through a fine champain country, well watered with beautiful drains, and enamelled with flowers of all
 35 kinds, which might contribute to charm every sense, were it not that the odoriferous gales are often more impregnated with dust than perfume.

'As you enter Kentish town, the eye is at once presented with the shops of artificers, such as venders of candles, small-coal, and hair
 40 brooms; there are also several august buildings of red brick, with

numberless sign-posts, or rather pillars, in a peculiar order of architecture; I send you a drawing of several, vide A. B. C. This pretty town probably borrows its name from its vicinity to the county of Kent: And indeed it is not unnatural that it should, as there are only London and the adjacent villages that lie between them. Be 5
 this as it will, perceiving night approach I made a hasty repast on roasted mutton, and a certain dried fruit called potatoes, resolving to protract my remarks upon my return: And this I would very willingly have done; but was prevented by a circumstance which in truth I had for some time foreseen, for night coming on, it was impossible to take a proper survey of the country, as I was obliged to return home in the dark.'

Adieu.

LETTER CXXIII.¹

[The Conclusion.]

15

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first president of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

AFTER a variety of disappointments, my wishes are at length fully satisfied. My son so long expected, is arrived, at once by his presence banishing my anxiety, and opening a new scene of unexpected pleasure. His improvements in mind and person have far surpassed even the sanguine expectations of a father. I left him a boy, but he is returned a man, pleasing in his person, hardened by travel, and polished by adversity. 20

His disappointment in love however, had infused an air of melancholy into his conversation, which seemed at intervals to interrupt our mutual satisfaction. I expected that this could find a cure only from time; but fortune, as if willing to load us with her favours, has in a moment repaid every uneasiness with rapture. 25

Two days after his arrival the man in black, with his beautiful niece, came to congratulate us upon this pleasing occasion: but guess our surprize, when my friend's lovely kinswoman was found 30

23 his] 62; om. PL

25 His] PL; no par. 62

31 occasion: but] 62; occasion. But PL

32 surprize] 62; pleasure and surprize PL

to be the very captive my son had rescued from Persia, and who had been wreck'd on the Wolga, and was carried by the Russian peasants to the port of Archangel. Were I to hold the pen of a novelist, I might be prolix in describing their feelings at so unexpected an
 5 interview, but you may conceive their joy without my assistance, words were unable to express their transports, then how can words describe it?

When two young persons are sincerely enamoured of each other, nothing can give me such pleasure as seeing them married: whether
 10 I know the parties, or not, I am happy at thus binding one link more in the universal chain. Nature has in some measure formed me for a match maker, and given me a soul to sympathize with every mode of human felicity. I instantly therefore consulted the man in black, whether we might not crown their mutual wishes by
 15 marriage; his soul seems formed of similar materials with mine, he instantly gave his consent, and the next day was appointed for the solemnization of their nuptials.

All the acquaintances which I had made since my arrival, were present at this gay solemnity. The little beau was constituted
 20 Master of the Ceremonies, and his wife Mrs. Tibbs conducted the entertainment with proper decorum. The man in black and the pawn-broker's widow were very sprightly and tender upon this occasion. The widow was dressed up under the direction of Mrs. Tibbs, and as for her lover, his face was set off by the assistance
 25 of a pig-tail wig, which was lent by the little beau, to fit him for making love with proper formality. The whole company easily perceived that it would be a double wedding before all was over, and indeed my friend and the widow seemed to make no secret of their passion; he even called me aside, in order to know my candid
 30 opinion, whether I did not think him a little too old to be married. As for my own part, continued he, I know I am going to play the fool, but all my friends will praise my wisdom, and produce me as the very pattern of discretion to others.

1 captive] 62; captive that *PL*

1-2 had been . . . Wolga, and] 62; *om. PL*

9 married: whether] 62; married. Whether *PL*

10 at] 62; in *PL*

11 chain. Nature] 62; chain; nature *PL*

22 tender] 62; sweet *PL*

23 direction] 62; inspection *PL*

24 her lover] 62; the man in black *PL*

29-33 passion; he . . . to others.] 62; passion. *PL*

At dinner every thing seemed to run on with good humour, harmony, and satisfaction. Every creature in company thought themselves pretty, and every jest was laughed at: the man in black sat next his mistress, helped her plate, chimed her glass, and jogging her knees and her elbow, he whispered something arch in her ear, 5 on which she patted his cheek; never was antiquated passion so playful, so harmless, and amusing, as between this reverend couple.

The second course was now called for, and among a variety of other Dishes, a fine turkey was placed before the widow. The Europeans, you know, carve as they eat; my friend therefore begged 10 his mistress to help him to a part of the turkey. The widow, pleased with an opportunity of shewing her skill in carving; an art, upon which it seems, she picqued herself; began to cut it up by first taking off the leg. *Madam*, cries my friend, *if I might be permitted to advise, I would begin by cutting off the wing, and then the Leg will* 15 *come off more easily.* Sir, replies the widow, give me leave to understand cutting up a fowl, I always begin with the leg. *Yes Madam*, replies the lover, *but if the wing be the most convenient manner, I would begin with the wing.* Sir, interrupts the lady, when you have fowls of your own, begin with the wing if you please; but give me 20 leave to take off the leg, I hope I am not to be taught at this time of day. *Madam*, interrupts he, *we are never too old to be instructed.* Old, Sir! interrupts the other, who is old, Sir? when I die of age, I know of some that will quake for fear; if the leg does not come off, take the turkey to yourself. *Madam*, replied the man in black, *I don't* 25 *care a farthing whether the leg or the wing comes off; if you are for the leg first, why you shall have the argument, even though it be as I say.* As for the matter of that, cries the widow, I don't care a fig, whether you are for the leg off, or on; and friend, for the future keep your distance. O, replied the other, *that is easily done, it is only removing* 30 *to the other end of the table, and so, madam, your most obedient humble servant.*

Thus, was this courtship of an age destroyed in one moment;

1-2 humour, harmony,] 62; humour PL

2 satisfaction. Every] 62; satisfaction, every PL

3 at: the] 62; at. The PL

4-5 jogging her . . . elbow, he] 62; jogged her elbow. He PL

6 on which] 62; and PL

7 so harmless . . . reverend couple] 62; harmless, and amusing PL

8-32 The second . . . *humble servant.*] 62; om. PL

33-1 (p. 476) Thus, was . . . this dialogue] 62; A dispute however about carving one of the dishes PL

for this dialogue effectually broke off the match between this respectable couple that had been but just concluded. The smallest accidents disappoint the most important treaties: However though it in some measure interrupted the general satisfaction, it no way
 5 lessened the happiness of the youthful couple, and, by the young lady's looks, I could perceive she was not entirely displeased with this interruption.

In a few hours the whole transaction seemed entirely forgotten, and we have all since enjoyed those satisfactions, which result from
 10 a consciousness of making each other happy. My son and his fair partner are fixed here for life, the man in black has given them up a small estate in the country, which added to what I was able to bestow, will be capable of supplying all the real but not the fictitious demands of happiness. As for myself the world being but one city
 15 to me, I don't much care in which of the streets, I happen to reside, I shall therefore spend the remainder of life in examining the manners of different countries, and have prevailed upon the man in black to be my companion. *They must often change says Confucius, who would be constant in happiness or wisdom.*¹ Adieu.

3 treaties:] 62; treaties. *PL*

3-4 though it] 62; though this quarrel *PL*

7 this] 62; the *PL*

9 have all since enjoyed] 62; all since enjoy *PL*

19 Following this *PL* has a par. om. 62: *It may not be improper to inform the Public that these letters will shortly be published, in two Volumes of the usual Spectator Size. The numerous Errors of the Press are corrected, and the Errors of the Writer, still, perhaps, more numerous, are retrenched. Some new Letters are added, and others, which were remarkable only for being dull, are wholly omitted. In short, such Pains have been taken, that the Editor will, perhaps, receive more Praise for his Industry, than the Writer for his Genius. I could be prolix upon the present Occasion, but shall be silent, for when we talk of ourselves, Vanity or Resentment have always too much to say.*

¹ This is the third maxim of Confucius given in Le Comte, i. 339: 'Un homme doit souvent changer, s'il veut estre constant dans la sagesse.'

